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*AUTHOR:*

[WERDMULLER, OTTO]

*TITLE:*

SPIRITUAL AND MOST  
PRECIOUSE PERLE,...

*PLACE:*

LONDON

*DATE:*

1812



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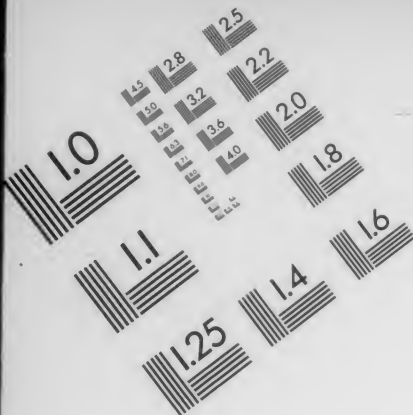
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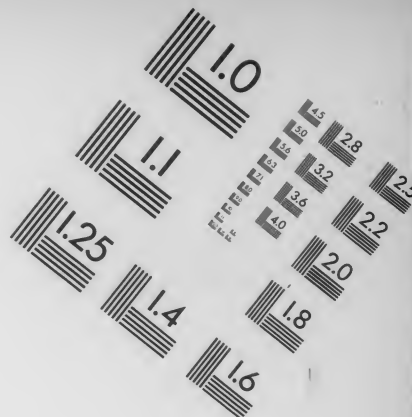
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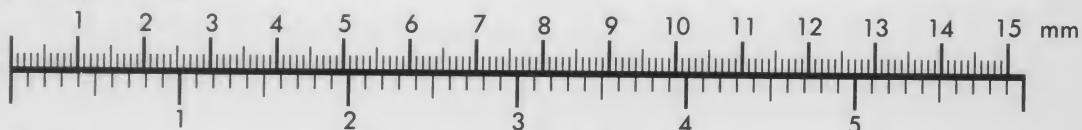
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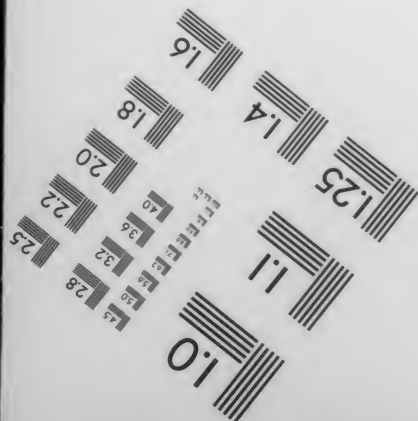
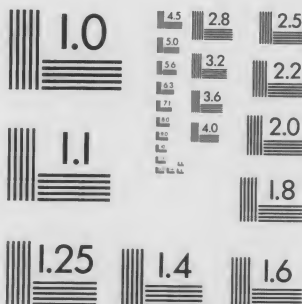
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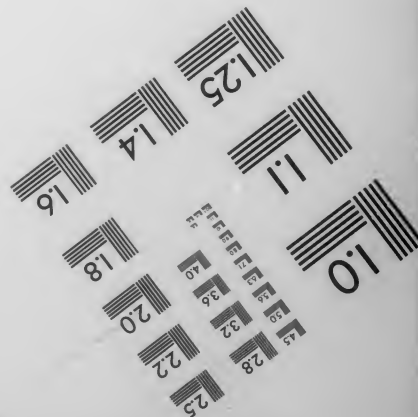
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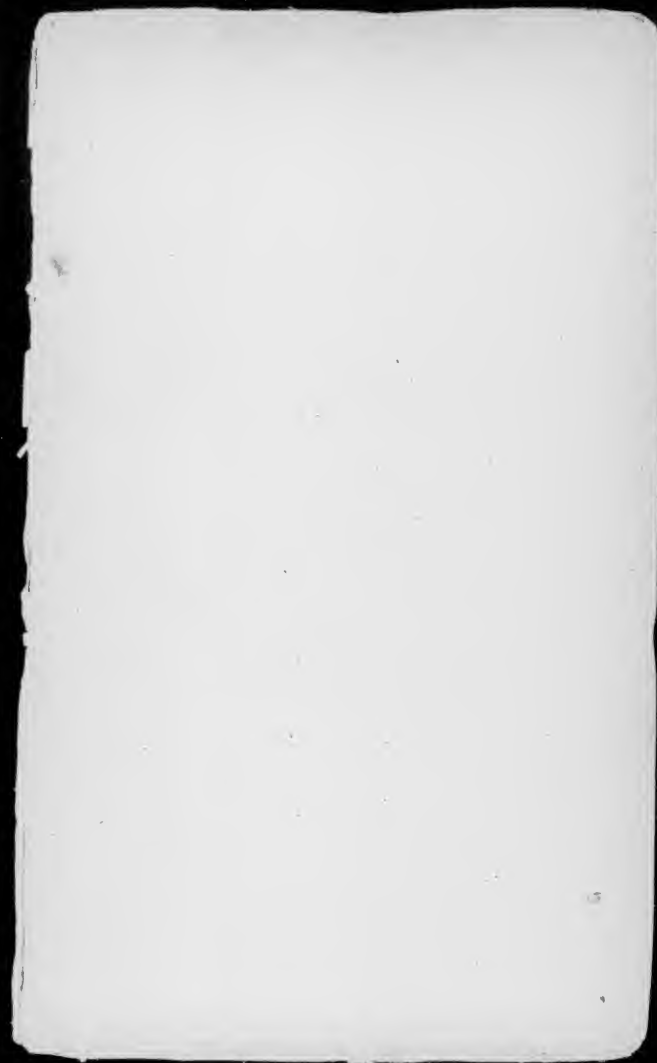


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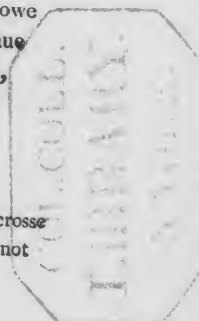
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all men should behaue  
themselves therein,  
accordyng to the  
Word of God.



Math. 10.

He that taketh not his crosse  
and followeth me, is not  
mete for me.)



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## PREFACE

TO THE  
PRESENT EDITION  
NEW YORK.

23ap.  
THE Tract now reprinted is usually supposed to have been written by Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, and Protector during the short reign of King Edward VI. who was his nephew. But it is, in fact, the production of *Wormulus*, and was first translated into the English language, from the original German of that author, by *Miles Coverdale*. When the "Protector" sank beneath the violence of party, and was committed to the Tower, a manuscript copy of the "Spiritual Pearl" afforded so much genuine consolation to his hours of melancholy privacy and political disgrace, that, on his release, he caused it to be printed, and prefixed that recommendatory address

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#### PREFACE TO THE

which does so much honour to his principles and understanding. The firm sense and soundness of general religious opinion contained in the work caused the edition published by the Duke to be eagerly procured by all parties. It is probable that the number of impressions was originally small, and the book has latterly become so scarce that a considerable price has been offered for a copy, by public advertisement.

Independent of its curiosity, it is presumed that the reader will find much to admire in this work. The charity, good-will, and unaffected humility of pious disposition evident in every page, seem calculated to interest the whole Christian world, in despite of that variety of opinions which so unhappily prevails in regard to certain doctrinal points. The "Spiritual Pearl" applies to the heart and conscience of man in a season when pride and pertinacity waver—the season of his trouble! It analyzes the source of his grief; it

#### PRESENT EDITION.

reasons with him on the propriety of his lamentation; and directs him, in language naturally energetical, and in terms remarkably pure and unembarrassed for the era of the writer, to the only true means of consolation—the mercy and grace of God as revealed in the Gospel.

The temperate modesty of the writer's opinions is highly creditable to the spirit of the early reforming age. Truth, like the sun of the natural day, rises in mists; and we frequently see the pages even of those who led to the conquest of systematical error, tainted by such harsh sentiments, or indications of personal acerbity, as the weakness of nature will too often obtrude on the best and most elevated intentions. From these the author of the present tract will be found, in general, happily exempt.

The Duke of Somerset, to whose partiality for this book we owe its

PREFACE TO THE

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translation into the English tongue, has been greatly misrepresented by the more violent of various parties, as well political as religious. He was a warm advocate of the Reformation, and thence arose the larger portion of his political troubles. He was possessed of all but kingly power, and the partizans of the Romish church were uniformly boisterous and intolerant. "Let us now see," says a modern writer \*, "how he conducted himself. The former reign afforded an ample excuse for severity, but Somerset chiefly employed the means of argument and mercy. Gardiner was the principal opposer of the Protector's 'innovations;' for which opposition he was confined, for a time, in the Fleet, but no faggot was lighted to settle the opinions of the vehement bishop."

\* Brewer, in his *Historical Description of splendid Palaces*, &c.

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The great work of the Reformation was, then, in its infancy, and Somerset must be supposed subject to many of the failings of half-enlightened understanding; but it is satisfactory to find that the man who imbibed consolation from a work of such genuine piety as the "Spiritual Pearl," was conspicuous for clemency and urbanity of habit.

Some factious writers, among whom *Parsons* may be distinguished, have not scrupled to assert that the Protector was so ignorant as scarcely to be able to read or write. So far is this from the fact, that, besides the original Preface to the present work, there was written by him a book under the title of "*Epistola Exhortatoria missa ad Nobilitatem ac Plebem universumque Populum Regni Scotiæ.*" Printed in 4to. at London, 1548. It is, likewise, known that *Calvin* addressed to him an epistle "of godly Consolation," which he trans-



PREFACE TO THE

lated from French into English, and which was printed in 1550, by Edward Whitchurch, under the title of "An Epistle, both of godly Conversacion and also of Advertisement, written by John Calvine, the Pastour and Preacher of Geneva, to the right Noble Prince, Edwarde, Duke of Somerset, before the Tyme or Knowledge had of his Trouble, but delyvered to the sayde Duke in the Time of his Trouble, and so translated out of Frenshe by the same Duke." Many of the Protector's letters are preserved in C. C. C. Cambridge, and there are several among the Harleian Manuscripts.

Although the Duke of Somerset prevailed over the rancour of his enemies, on his first committal to the Tower, he was, at length, completely reduced by it. The circumstances attending his final downfall are thus narrated in the historical and descriptive work before quoted:—"Though the humiliation of the Duke had been so

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complete as to satisfy, for some time, the malignity of his most bitter opponents, yet the jealous ambition of Warwick (shortly dignified with the title of Duke of Northumberland) caused him to look with dislike on the popularity Somerset still possessed, in spite of comparative poverty and degradation. Even the alliance that existed between the families (Northumberland's son had married the Protector's daughter) availed nothing. Northumberland gained, by sinister means, the confidence of Somerset's principal servants. The unguarded Duke often broke out into menacing expressions against his enemy. At other times he formed rash projects, which he immediately abandoned, and his treacherous confidants carried to their employer every passionate word which dropped from him.—At length, these very betrayers suggested to Somerset a plan for murdering Northumberland, Northampton, and Pembroke, at a banquet to be given by Lord Pa-

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get. An insurrection in the North was to second the enterprise; the Tower was to be secured; and a rebellion excited in London. This suggestion was made the instrument of his utter ruin. In one night the Duke of Somerset, and nearly the whole of his small residue of friends, were committed to custody; and, next day, the Dutchess, with her favourite attendants, were thrown into prison.

“ Somerset was tried on the double charges of high treason and felony. With indecent malignity, Northumberland, Pembroke, and Northampton, composed three of the jury. Still, the reasonable part of the charge was so weakly supported, that a majority of the peers gave a verdict in favour of the accused.

“ The intention of assaulting privy-counsellors was, however, so far established by evidence, that he was convicted of felony, and received sentence

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accordingly. The crowds without, who waited with deep anxiety the issue of this important trial, expressed their opinion of the question by loud and reiterated shouts, when the prisoner was exonerated from the first part of his accusation; and the grief occasioned by his conviction of felony was denoted in terms no less sincere, and scarcely less boisterous.

“ This once-potent and magnificent Duke met his fate on the scaffold on Tower-hill. He was attended by immense throngs of spectators, whose clamorous friendship broke forth in demands for his pardon, even to the last moment.—Many of them rushed forward, to dip their handkerchiefs in his blood, which they long preserved as a precious relique; and some of them, soon after, when Northumberland met with a like doom, upbraided him with this cruelty, and displayed to him these symbols of his crime.”

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OF  
THE SPIRITUAL AND MOST PRECIOUS  
PEARL.

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THE PREFACE.

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EDWARD, by the grace of God, Duke of Somerset, uncle to King Edward the Sixth, his excellent Majesty, &c. to the Christian reader greeting.

If they be worthy praise, who for a zeal and desire that they have to do their neighbours good, do write and put in print such things as by experience they have proved, or by hearsay of grave and trusty men they have learned, or by reading of good and ancient authors they have understood to be a salve or medicine to a man's body, or to a part or member of the same: how much more deserve they thanks and praise, that teach us a true comfort, salve, and medicine of the soul, spirit, and mind! The which spirit and mind, the more precious it is than the body, the more dangerous be his sores and sickness, and the more thankworthy the cure thereof.

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For a well-quieted mind to a troubled body yet maketh quietness; and sickness of body or loss of goods is not much painful to him that esteemeth it not, or taketh it patiently.

But an unquiet mind, yea, to a most whole body, maketh health unpleasant, and death to be wished; and an unsatiable mind with desire of more maketh riches poverty, and health a sickness, strength an infirmity, beauty a deformity, and wealth beggary: when by comparing his felicity with a better, it loseth the grace and joy of that which it hath, and feeleth the smart of that it hath not.

Now then, since to amend this in wealth, and to take away sorrow and grief even thence, where in very deed is no apparent cause of grief, through our weakness, is no less than the work of a very great master of physick, and deserveth much commendation; what is he worthy of, that can ease true grief indeed, and make health where a very sore resteth? I mean, that can

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ease a man set in affliction, take away grief from him that is persecuted, loose the prisoner yet in bonds, remove adversity in adversity, or make grievous sickness not to be felt, and extreme beggary to be rejoiced at.

Divers learned men heretofore, by reasons grounded of man's knowledge, wrote and invented great comfort against all kind of griefs; and so among the gentiles' and philosophers' books be books of comfort.

But whosoever followeth but worldly and man's reason to teach comfort to the troubled mind, he can give but a counterfeit medicine; as the surgeon doth, which colourably healeth, or the physician which giveth medicines that do but astonish the sore place, and so deceive the patient. But the true healing of grief and sorrow they had not, for they lacked the ground; they lacked that that should heal the sore at the bone first, that is, true faith in Christ and his holy word. All medicines of the soul which be laid on the



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sores thereof, not having that cleanser with them, be but over-healers: they do not take away the rankling within; and many times, under colour of hasty healing, they bring forth proud flesh in the sore, as evil or worse than that which was first corrupt. This man, whosoever he be, that was the first author of this book, goeth the right way to work: he bringeth his ground from God's word: he taketh with him the oil and wine of the Samaritan: he carrieth the hurt man from thence where he lay hurt, and bringeth him to his right host, where, no doubt, he may be cured, if he will apply himself thereto.

It is read in histories, that the manner among the old Egyptians or Assyrians was, when any were sick to lay him abroad, that every man that passed by might tell if he had been vexed with such-like sickness, what thing that was that did cure and heal him, and so they might use it to the patient. And by this means it is

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thought, that the science of physic was first found out: so that it may appear that this readiness for to teach another that thing wherein a man feeleth ease of grief, is not only Christian, but also natural.

In our great trouble, which of late did happen unto us (as all the world doth know), when it pleased God for a time to attempt us with his scourge, and to prove if we loved him, in reading this book we did find great comfort, and an inward and godly working power, much relieving the grief of our minds. The which thing now calling to remembrance, we do think it our duty not to be more unnatural, than the old Egyptians were; but rather, as the office of a Christian is, to be ready to help all men by all ways possible that we can, and specially those that be afflicted.

And hereupon we have required him, of whom we had the copy of this book, to set it forth in print, that not only we, or one or two more, but

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all that be afflicted, may take profit and consolation, if they will; yea, and they that be not afflicted, may either see what they should have done in their trouble, or what hereafter they ought to do, if any like happeneth unto them; knowing certainly, that such is the uncertainty of the world and all human things, that no man standeth so sure, but the tempest of affliction and adversity may overtake him; and if the grace of God do not singularly help him, cast him down, and make him fall.

Wherefore it is most necessary all ways to have in readiness such godly meditations and medicines as may pacify God's wrath beginning to kindle, and defend in part the bitterness of affliction, whereof this book is very plenteous and full. Fare you well.

A  
SPIRITUAL AND MOST PRECIOUS

PEARL,

&c.

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*That all trouble and affliction cometh  
from God.*

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

I CALL all that trouble and affliction, whatsoever is reputed to be contrary to the desire and appetite of man's nature; as the unquiet suggestions of the flesh, the temptations of the devil, sickness of body, a wicked and froward mate in matrimony, to have disobedient children, unkind and unthankful friends, loss of goods, to be deprived of any old liberty or privilege, loss or blemish of name and fame, the malice and displeasure of

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men, hunger, dearth, pestilence, war, imprisonment, and death. And in this register do I put all kinds of crosses and afflictions, whether they be bodily or ghostly, our own or our friends', private and singular, or universal and general, privy and secret, or open and manifest, deserved or undeserved.

In all such things, I say every Christian man ought first of all to consider the very root, ground, and beginning, after this wise: that all things, whatsoever God sendeth, we ought to take and receive them patiently. For this is once true, that God is our Creator and Maker, and we his workmanship: he is our King, our Lord, and Father; and likeas it is not seeming that the pot should murmur against the potmaker (Isa. xlv. lxiv. Jer. xviii.), even so is it much less convenient, that we should murmur and grudge against God's will and judgment. And although trouble and affliction riseth and springeth oftentimes by the wickedness of ene-

mies, and through the instigation of the devil, or else by some other means; yet ought we never to imagine that it cometh by fortune or chance, without the permission, sufferance, determination and will of God, but by and with the foreknowledge, providence, and appointment of God. (Ezek. xxviii. Job, i. Matt. x.)

And to speak properly concerning safeguard, it is all one (so that we tempt not God), whether we live in poverty or in riches, in the fire or in the water, among our enemies or among our friends, seeing that God seeth, knoweth, disposeth, and ruleth all things, as witnesseth the first book of the Kings. (Deut. xxxii.) The Lord bringeth to death, and restoreth again unto life; bringeth into the grave, and raiseth up again; putteth down, and exalteth also. And Job also testifieth in his misery: The Lord hath given it, and the Lord hath taken it again. And Christ saith, There falleth not a sparrow upon the earth with-

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out your Father's will, yea, the hairs of your head are all numbered. (Luke, xii.)

Seeing then, that all our troubles and afflictions come from God, we ought to humble and submit our hearts and minds unto the obedience of God, and to suffer him to work with us according unto his most holy will and pleasure. Wherefore, whensoever unseasonable weather shall hurt and perish the corn and fruit of the earth, or when a wicked man shall misreport us, or raise up any slander of us, why should we murmur and grudge against the elements, or go about to revenge us of our enemies? For if we lift not up our minds, and consider that God layeth his hand upon us, and that it is he that striketh us, we are even like unto dogs and no better, which if a man do cast a stone at them, will bite the stone without any respect who did cast the stone.

And again, no man ought to be unwilling or discontent to render again

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that talent or pledge that was committed to him only to reserve and keep. (Matt. xxv.) It is that God that giveth us life, health of body, strength, wife, children, friends, riches, honour, power, authority, peace, rest, and quietness for a time, so long as pleaseth him. Now if the same God will take again some of these things or all, he taketh nothing but his own, and even that which we did owe unto him; for the which cause to murmur against his will, and to strive against his judgment, it cannot be but an heinous and grievous sin.

*That trouble, and affliction, and adversity, are sent unto us of God; even for the punishment of our sins.*

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Now what thing moveth or causeth God to send home unto us, and visit us with afflictions, trouble, and vexation? Concerning this point mark this well. Whatsoever any man hath

merited and deserved, that ought he to bear and to suffer willingly and gladly. (Prov. xxii.)

Let every man appose and examine himself, whether he hath not deserved to be corrected and chastened of God; if it be not for any special thing at the present instant, yet for other sins committed at other times? Now will our Lord God, in all manners of punishments and visitations, declare the order of his righteousness, and his heavy wrath and indignation against sin and wickedness. (Rom. v. vi. Num. xiv. Nahum, i.) ; for he saith in the second commandment, "I the Lord which am thy God, am a jealous and earnest God, and I will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, even until the third and fourth generation, if they hate and contemn me." And in the fifth book of Moses are all the plagues rehearsed, one after another, which shall be poured out upon the wicked and ungodly: and in Luke (chap. xiii.) it is said thus: "If ye

do not amend, ye shall all perish." And that we may perceive even before our eyes evidently, how that punishment and plagues are the due rewards for sin, God tempereth and frameth the punishment even like unto the sin; so that they do both agree together as well in form and likeness, as in proportion and quality. As for an example: likeas David defiled Uriah's wife, even so were his wives defiled unto him again. He caused Uriah to be slain and destroyed, and therefore did his son destroy his own brother again, and stirred a sedition and uproar, and hunted and drove his father out of his kingdom; so that no man can sufficiently express the great misery and punishment that David and his people suffered, for the shameful wickedness and abomination that he had committed. (2 Sam. xiii. xiv. xv. xvi. xvii. xviii. xix. xx.)

Now consider and weigh, as it were in a true balance, the righteousness that God requireth of us on the one

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Now consider and weigh, as it were in a true balance, the righteousness that God requireth of us on the one

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side, and again the whole trade of our life on the other side. If the generation of mankind had been conformable unto the law of God, and had not swerved from the same, it had been altogether thoroughly happy and blessed evermore, and should never have rotted and dried away like the fruit and flowers of the field. (Wisd. ii. x. Eccl. xv. xvii.)

But it swerved and fell away at the first, even from the beginning. Our first parents and progenitors did neglect and despise God's commandments, and so we through their fall are corrupt and infected, our reason, senses, and understanding blinded, and our will poisoned. We feel and find in us wicked lusts and affections; we seek in the world lust and pleasure, even against the holy word of God. And like as if an ass were trimmed and decked in a lion's skin, and would needs be a lion, yet his long ears, being always upwards, should easily descry and bewray him; even so if we adorn,

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garnish, and set forth ourselves with certain glorious beautiful works, never so much, so that no man can say but that we are utterly innocent and unculpable in divers and many points; yet, notwithstanding, we have filthy, unclean, and wicked hearts, full of security and neglect of God, altogether given to the love of ourselves, and to all manner of dissoluteness.

Now therefore if we be assaulted and visited with sickness, poverty, war, sedition, we ought not to ascribe these things, one to the magistrate, another to the preacher and minister of God's word, or to the faith and religion itself, and the third to the elements and stars, or to God in heaven himself, as though any of these were the occasion of such plagues.

Like as no man ought to accuse and blame the physician, as though he were the only occasion of the corrupt humours within the body, notwithstanding that he hath brought and driven them out, that a man may

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evidently see and perceive them ; but the misbehaviour and intemperate diet of the man himself is the very right occasion, and the only root thereof ; even so we ought not to ascribe any blame or fault unto God, if he send unto us heaviness, pain, and trouble, but to think that it is a medicine and remedy meet for our sins, and every man to ascribe the very cause and occasion thereof unto himself and his own sins, and to refer the blame to nothing else.

And this example did the holy men, our godly forefathers, in old times shew, declare, and leave unto us, ascribing always the cause and occasion of the cross, and of such heavy afflictions as did happen in their time, even unto their own sins. As Daniel saith (chap. ix.), " By reason of our sins, and of the wickedness of our fathers, is Jerusalem and thy people destroyed, even of those that dwell about us." For the which cause we ought rather to lament and bewail,

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yea, and to cry out, Alas ! alas ! out, out upon our sins and wickedness, than either upon any infirmity, sickness, or upon any other affliction or tribulation, which we suffer by reason of our sins. (Jonah, iii.)

For if we should wail and be heavy without reason or measure, when God doth nothing but execute justice and righteousness upon his enemies, what were it else but to mislike the righteousness of God, and even to love that thing which God hateth ? and what is this else, but only the very righteousness and goodness of God, when he punisheth, martyreth, and utterly subdueth and destroyeth in us, here in this world, his and our great enemies, that is to say, our sins ?

Therefore to sorrow and mourn without measure, in the midst of affliction and trouble, is nothing else but to shew thyself a friend unto sin, which is thine and God's highest enemy. Wherefore we should rather laud God, and highly rejoice, not



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specially because of the misery and affliction, but in the righteous and gracious will of God; righteous, I say, because he punisheth sin; and again, gracious and merciful, forasmuch as he doth punish it much more easily than we have justly deserved.

*All manner of trouble and afflictions, whatsoever they be, are always much less and lighter than are our sins.*

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Whensoever a man doth give a small and light punishment unto him that hath deserved much greater, it is reason that he receive and take it patiently: As one that hath slain and murdered a man, if he be but beaten and whipped out of the city or town, he taketh it in good part, because he knoweth well enough that he hath deserved to be hanged.

The holy woman Judith thinketh that all these transitory punishments are much less and far inferior than our

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sins and wickednesses (Jud. viii.); wherefore if thou suffer poverty, sickness, or any other adversity, consider and think with thyself after this manner: well thy manifold sins have deserved a thousand thousand times more grievous punishment, more heavy sickness, more horrible war, and more intolerable imprisonment.

And if all the miseries of the world should come together upon one heap unto thee, yet thou hast deserved much worse; for thou hast well deserved the full power and tyranny of the devil and eternal damnation, which notwithstanding God hath kept and taken from thee of his mere mercy, only for Jesus Christ's sake. Item, he that hath received alway good and prosperous things, ought not to marvel and wonder, if sometimes he receive also some misfortune and adversity. Even the children of this world can say, that there is never a good hour but hath also deserved an evil.

Now so merciful is God, that he

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suffereth no man upon earth unrewarded with one benefit or other; as well before trouble as after, yea, and also in the very time thereof, he giveth him many high and excellent gifts and benefits, as well bodily as ghostly, corporal as spiritual.

As for his benefits before trouble and affliction, we have a notable example set before our eyes in Job, which saith (chap. ii.), "Seeing we have received much goodness of God, why should we not be content also to receive the evil?" Likewise Pliny the second, being an heathen man, as he would comfort a friend of his, whose dear spouse and wife was departed out of the world, among other things he wrote after this manner: This ought to be a singular comfort unto thee, that thou hast had and enjoyed such a precious jewel so long a time.

For forty-four years did she live with thee, and there was never any strife, brawling; nor contention between you, nor never one of you once

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displeased the other; yea, but now thou wilt say, So much the more loath and unwilling am I to forbear and to be without her, seeing I lived so long a time so quietly with her. For we forget soon such pleasures and commodities as we have proved and tasted but a little time only. But to answer to this, take thou heed that thou be not found unthankful, if thou wilt only weigh and consider what thou hast lost, and not remember how long thou didst enjoy her.

And again, in the very time and midst of affliction and tribulation, God giveth us grace to consider other good and prosperous things, which we have and enjoy still, that through the remembrance and consideration of them, our smart and pain may be eased, mollified, and mitigated.

As for an example: thou art a weak, impotent, and a diseased man in thy body; but yet hath God given thee reasonable and convenient goods and possessions to sustain thee with;

or else, if thou hast scarceness and lack of goods and riches, yet thou hast no lack of bodily health.

Now if we will not set and weigh the one against the other, then are we like unto little children, which if any man happen a little to disturb or hinder their play or game, or to take any manner of thing from them, they will by and by cast away all the rest also, and will fall on weeping. Even so, were it possible enough for us to do likewise, whensoever any misfortune should happen unto us, to wax angry and displeased; and to have no manner of lust nor desire to use nor to enjoy that good, that still remaineth and is left behind.

Be it in case that thou wert deprived of all manner of bodily comfort; yet in thy breast and heart thou hast the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which hath redeemed thee out of hell and damnation, that was due unto thee; in respect of the which damnation all plagues upon earth are to be esteemed

as one little drop of water against the whole sea. (Rom. v. 1 Cor. v. Col. i. ii. 1 Pet. iii. Heb. ix. &c.)

Besides this, also through faith thou seekest a confidence and assurance of everlasting and eternal joy. As St. Paul doth write of the same, saying: "I suppose the afflictions of this world are not worthy of the glory that shall be revealed unto us." (Rom. viii.) An example have we set before our eyes in the prodigal and desperate son, which did so humble and submit himself, that he desired no more to be taken for a son, but to be put to labour as a day-labourer and an hired servant, so that he might but only remain in his father's house. (Luke, xvi.) Even so, whatsoever God sendeth ought we to take patiently, so that we may but only dwell in the house of God in heaven with him everlastingly.

Now if any man should think thus: God doth not punish others which have committed much more heinous sins, with so great and grievous plagues

and diseases as he doth us ; that were unreverently and unchristianly imagined of God. For what if thou thyself be more wicked than any other ? But be it so, that others do live more wickedly and licentiously than thou, what wottest thou how God doth punish them ? The greatest and most grievous pains and punishments are the inward sorrows and secret punishments of the mind, which are not seen with the outward eye.

And although they have no special sorrow nor singular grief that appeareth unto thee, and thou knowest not what God meaneth thereby, yet oughtest thou (as a child unto the father) to give unto him honour, laud, and praise, that he disposeth all things with such wisdom, and in such order.

And when he seeth time, he will reward and consider all such things as have been wrought and committed heretofore against his most righteous and just laws, according as they have deserved.

*All manner of afflictions are sent and come from God, of a loving and fatherly mind towards us.*

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

It is not sufficient for us to know, that all manner of affliction cometh by the permission and sufferance of God, of his just judgment by reason of our sins. For in extreme temptations, and in great necessities, these are the first thoughts and imaginations that come into our minds : Forasmuch as I have grievously offended God with my sins, therefore is he displeased with me, and now become my enemy, and hath cast his favour from me.

And if we prevent not, and shift away such fantasies and imaginations in time, they will make us to fly from God, to forsake him, and to abhor and grudge against him ; as Saul did, which imagined and fully persuaded himself that God punished him of hatred and displeasure against him. And

therefore Saul's heart turned from God, and forsook him, and so he began to hate and abhor him, as a cruel tyrant. (1 Sam. xviii.)

Wherefore unto such points and articles as are taught heretofore, this admonition doth also appertain: we ought to receive with high thankfulness whatsoever God of a fatherly and loving mind, and not of any indignation towards us, sendeth unto us, whether it be to the flesh pleasant or grievous. The Lord God visiteth us with temporal and transitory misery, even for the very careful and fatherly heart that he beareth towards us, and not of any hatred or indignation against us. (Tobit, xii. Job, v. Hosea, vi. 1 Pet. iv. Heb. xii. Rev. iii.)

For God is reconciled and at one with all Christian men, through his Son; and loveth them, even from the very ground of his heart.

For the which cause, howsoever or by what manner of means it be that God punisheth and correcteth us, he

doth it not because he hateth us, as though he would utterly refuse and cast us away; but of very pity and compassion, only to receive us as his children; to keep and preserve us, to exercise and practise us, to humble and to bring us down, and to stir and prick us forward; that prayer, faith, the fear of God, obedience and other virtues, may wax and increase in us, to his honour and our salvation.

Testimonies for this have we, first: "As truly as I live, I have no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but that he turn and live." (Ezek. xviii.) Here now doth God swear, that he doth punish, not to destroy, but to allure, reduce, and bring us unto repentance.

Item: "Whom the Lord loveth, him doth he chasten, and yet notwithstanding he hath pleasure in him, as a father in his child." (Prov. iii.)

This is an evident testimony that affliction, trouble, and vexation, are no tokens of the wrath and displea-

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sure of God, but rather sure tokens of his grace, mercy, and favour, whereby God assureth us of his merciful will and fatherly heart towards us. Item: "We know that unto such as love God, all things serve to the best." (Rom. viii.) And again: "We are corrected and punished of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." (1 Cor. xi.)

All this mayest thou also mark in the whole story of Job throughout. Likewise Joseph was sold of his brethren, and delivered unto the heathen, of very malice and envy, by the provocation and suggestion of the devil. But the most faithful God turneth it to the profit and wealth, both of the house of Israel, and also of the whole kingdom of Egypt: for so did Joseph himself interpret it. (Gen. xxxvii. xlv.)

Again, the church of Christ, that is to say, the Christian congregation, which is Christ's spouse, must suffer vexation and affliction here upon earth.

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But forasmuch as God loveth this his spouse of his Son, namely, the congregation of the faithful, and mindeth to comfort her, and to be most beneficial unto her; therefore likeas he hath raised up Christ her bridegroom, head, and king, from death, even so will he also deliver her from all affliction, and give her a joyful victory of all such things as do oppress her. But it is the infirmity and fault of our weak eyes, that we cannot espy the merciful and loving goodness of God, in and under the rod and scourge.

Whensoever we are visited with affliction and misery, it is our duty, indeed, first to acknowledge and remember our sins, and again to consider the yoke and bands of the devil for sin; but we ought not to judge and imagine of such affliction according to the purpose and will of the devil (as he of a malicious and a mischievous mind that he beareth us, mindeth towards us; which seeketh continually

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nothing else, but the utter destruction and confusion of all mankind); but rather we ought to esteem and consider of all such troubles and afflictions, according as God meaneth, and so receive them, which of his mere goodness turneth them to our wealth and profit, working and finishing thereby our perfect salvation.

And wheresoever the heart cannot conceive this comfort, that God correcteth and punisheth for very merciful favour and love towards us, there of necessity must the temptation and grief be much the greater, and the party at length fall to utter desperation.

*That only God, for Christ's sake, and that of very mercy, love, and favour, doth correct and punish us.*

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The very right and only cause of the merciful and fatherly will of God towards us, have we in the only merits of Jesus Christ, unto whom we ought

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to lift up our hearts toward heaven, and to behold and consider him with our minds continually, after this manner:

Our sins and misdeeds deserve hunger, death, war, pestilence, and all manner of plagues. Now hath Christ ransomed and made full satisfaction for all the sins that we have committed. (Isai. liii. John, i. iii. Rom. v. vi. viii. Eph. ii. Col. i. ii. 1 Pet. iii. 1 John, iv. Heb. ix. &c.) He hath redeemed, paid, discharged, and made harmless unto us all our misdeeds with his bitter death, victory, and resurrection, and hath satisfied his Father's righteousness, as St. Paul doth testify very comfortably, saying, "Jesus is become and made unto us our wisdom, our righteousness, our sanctification, and our redemption." (1 Cor. i.) So then, now, if afflictions hurt us only by reason of our sins, and our sins besatisfied and discharged through the death and passion of Jesus, then must it needs follow, that all our af-

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fictions also are likewise harmless unto us, and cannot hurt us.

Yea, Christ, with and through his passion and affliction, hath blessed and sanctified all manner of afflictions, that they all should serve and redound unto all faithful Christians for their greatest wealth, by the ordinance and provision of God, their heavenly Father. He is the true physician, which after he perceiveth the affliction did fear us, took upon himself to suffer all manner of trouble, yea, the most grievous sorrows and extremities, because he would set and appoint a certain measure and end unto our sorrows, and also bless and sanctify, yea, and also make pleasant and delectable very death itself unto us.

Oh! if we could feel, behold, and consider the heart and mind of Christ, when he did willingly hang upon the cross, and suffered himself so cruelly and painfully to be tormented and punished, for no other cause but that he might utterly take away the whole

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strength of all our sins, sorrow, and death, and destroy hell, that none of them should hurt us. And again, that he tasted and drank of the cup before us, that we being sick and weak might the rather drink and taste of it after him, forasmuch as no evil mis-happened unto him thereof, but immediately rose up again from death. Oh, if the knowledge and remembrance of this might remain in our hearts upright, and shine continually before us! Then should we never sink or faint; nor yet despair of the mercy and goodness of God, although we should labour in never so dangerous and grievous battle, and though we ourselves should taste and feel the due punishment that our sins have deserved: then should we be able to stand stiffly against the gates of hell; and all manner of sorrow, heaviness, temptation, fear, and misfortune, should thereby be utterly consumed and swallowed up.

And even this is the highest and



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most special comfort that ever was heard or read of from the beginning of the world. He is only alone sufficient (if we consider him and take hold of him as we should do) to plant and graft such a mind in us, that we shall not only not sorrow nor be heavy, but also triumph, and rejoice in and of our misery and affliction, as Paul triumphed excellently and highly, where he saith, "If God hath not spared his only Son, but hath given him up for us all, how should he not give us all things with him?" (Rom. viii.)

What make we then with our vain fearfulness, care, sorrow, and heaviness?

Wherefore (if we will be right Christians) we must with all thankfulness set forth, extol, and magnify this excellent, infinite, and heavenly grace and benefit of God, and the high and singular comfort which we have by Christ.

For all they that lack the knowledge

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of the benefit that we have by Christ, and refuse this excellent and high treasure, whether they be Jews or Heathens, Mahometans or Popish, they cannot be able to give any true, perfect, or wholesome comfort, either to themselves or to any other, in any manner of fear or doubt of the conscience, or in any other affliction and necessity.

So long as they are quiet and safe, and neither feel nor consider the pain of death, or any other grief or necessity, they may well live securely and boldly without any manner of fear; but when the evil hour once cometh, that the weather changeth a little; that either through the revelation and opening of the law they feel and perceive the wrath of God over them, or else through the manifest and evident tokens and preaching of the just punishment and vengeance of God, and through the present taste of some plagues, they are suddenly taken and stricken with fear, then doth all their

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wisdom, counsel, and policy, wherewith to withstand any such evil, utterly fail them, and suddenly deceive them.

Then fly they from God, and cannot tell whither to run, nor where to hide themselves.

And how small soever their temptation or plague is, their heart is dashed, and as sore afraid (as Moses saith) of the noise of a leaf, as of a thunder-clap. (Levit. xxvi. Prov. xxviii.) And with such manner of persons the whole trade of their former life, with all their labour, travail, and afflictions, in their superstitious serving of God, and in their hard and strait life, is utterly lost and spent in vain.

Yea, what comfort soever they have sought beside Christ, it is all nothing else but an augmentation of their sorrowful fear, and a training of them towards desperation. So that without and besides the Lord Jesus, there is no manner of comfort, aid, nor suc-

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cour, at all to be looked for. (Acts, iv. Phil. ii.)

*Similitudes and comparisons, declaring how and after what manner God doth plague and chasten us of very love, mercy, and favour towards us.*

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Whenas Almighty God, for the merits of his Son, not of any ireful mind or displeasure, but of a good will and loving heart towards us, doth correct and punish us, he may be compared and likened unto a father, a mother, a master, a physician, an husbandman, a goldsmith, and such-like, after this sense: likeas the natural father first teacheth his dear beloved child, and afterward giveth him warning and monition, and then correcteth him at last; even so the eternal God assayeth all manner of ways with us, which are well grown and old in years, but young and tender in faith.

First he teacheth us his will through

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the preaching of his word, and giveth us warning. Now if so be that we will not follow him, then he beateth and jirketh us a little with a rod, as sometime with poverty, sometime with sickness and diseases, or with other afflictions, which should be named and esteemed as nothing else but children's rods, or the wands of correction.

Now if such a rod or wand will not help nor do any good, then taketh the father a whip or a stick. As in case his son waxeth stubborn, and will spend his money and thrift wantonly and riotously at the tippling-house with evil company, then cometh the father and pulleth him out by the hair of his head, bindeth his hands and feet, and beateth him till his bones crack, and sendeth him into prison; or banisheth him out of the country: even so when we wax obstinate and stubborn, and care in manner neither for words nor for stripes, then sendeth God unto us more heavy and universal plagues, as pestilence, dearth, sedi-

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tion, uproar, casualty of fire, murder, war, loss of victory, that, being taken of our enemies, we are led away prisoners and captives, &c.

All this he doth to fear and to tame us, and as it were with violence to drive and to force us unto repentance, and amendment of our lives. Now truth it is, that it is against the father's will to strike his child; he would much rather do him all the good that ever he could. But through long suffering and over-much cherishing, the children wax rude, and forget all nurture. Therefore doth he punish them; but yet, in the midst of all his anger and punishment, his fatherly heart breaketh out.

In case that he putteth his son away from him for some grievous fault, yet he sendeth him not away altogether comfortless, but giveth him some garments, and some comfortable words, and so sendeth him from him, not to remain for evermore in banishment, but when he is once a little humbled,

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meekened, and amended, to turn home again. And this is only the father's mind, to turn and keep from his son all such things as might hurt and destroy him, and never mindeth to cast away or utterly to forsake his child.

Even so, certainly when God sendeth misery and affliction upon our necks, there layeth hidden under that rod a fatherly heart and affection. For the peculiar and natural property of God is to be loving and friendly, to heal, to help, and to do good to his children, mankind.

Adam and Eve, when they were put into paradise, were they not plentifully endowed with all good things? But they could not order nor use them rightly, as none of us all can (Gen. iii.); but as soon as we have all things at pleasure, and lack nothing that we could desire, then forthwith wax we both negligent and slothful.

And therefore God sendeth us evil, that he may do us good; and yet in

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the midst of all affliction and punishment he sendeth some mitigation, comfort, and succour. And we may take example by our foresaid first parents, Adam and Eve; whenas God was fully determined upon the very point to exclude and banish them out of paradise, first he clothed them against the frost and violence of the weather; and he comforted them also with the promise of the blessed seed (Gen. iii.), which maketh all manner of affliction not only easy and harmless, but also wholesome and profitable unto us.

And this same nature doth the immutable God never change, but keepeth it continually; he will not utterly forsake us, but only suffer us a little to smart for the sins that we have committed, and so preserve us from sin afterward, that we run not into the danger of eternal pain.

Furthermore be it, in case that the father hath two sons, whereof the one behaveth himself wickedly, and yet

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his father punisheth or correcteth him nothing at all, the other for the least fault that he doth is taken up and corrected by and by; what thing else is the cause of this, but that the father hath no hope of amendment at all of the one, and therefore mindeth to put him clearly from his heritage, and to give him no part thereof? For the heritage pertaineth wholly to that son that is chastened and corrected.

And yet the same poor son that is thus chastened, thinketh in his mind that his brother is much more happy than he, forasmuch as he is never beaten nor stricken. And therefore he sighs and mourneth by himself, and thinketh thus: Well, my brother doth what he will against my father's will, and without his leave, and yet my father giveth him not one foul word; he suffereth him to take his pleasure, and to run where he will; and towards me he sheweth not so much as a good look, but is ever in my top if I do but look awry, &c.

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Here now mayest thou mark the foolishness and ignorance of the child, which hath respect only unto the present grief, and never remembereth nor considereth what is reserved and kept in store for him. Even such thoughts and imaginations have Christian men and women also, whenas they suffer much tribulation, and see on the other side how prosperously it goeth with the wicked and ungodly sort; whereas they ought rather to comfort themselves with the remembrance of the heritage that is reserved for them in heaven, which appertaineth unto them, as good and virtuous children.

As for the other, that hop and spring, make merry, and take their pleasure now for a while, they shall be deprived of the heritage everlastingly as strangers, and shall have no part thereof.

And this proveth St. Paul, where he saith, " My son, fear not when thou art corrected of the Lord, but receive his punishment thankfully, and

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with a good will ; for whomsoever the Lord loveth, him doth he chastise and punish, and scourgeth every child that he receiveth. Now if ye be partakers of correction, then doth God offer and shew himself unto you as a father. And if all those that be children be corrected, and ye without correction, are ye not then bastards, and not children ?" (Heb. xii.) In these words doth St. Paul evidently compare and liken the punishment of the Lord unto the correction of a natural father.

And whom should not these words make to tremble and quake ? whereas he saith, those are bastards, and not right and lawful children, which are not punished. And again, whom should not this thing rejoice and comfort ? whereas he saith, they that are punished are children.

Wherefore, although the Almighty Lord sheweth himself displeased with us, it is nothing else but a displeasure of a most kind and loving father, which seeketh not our destruction and un-

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doing, but only our reformation, amendment, and wealth. Give over thyself, therefore, patiently to the will of God thy faithful father. Rejoice in the correction of the Lord, forasmuch as thou art sure and certain thereby that he beareth a gracious and a fatherly heart, mind, and will towards thee.

Furthermore, God is also in this behalf compared to a mother. The mother feedeth and nourisheth the child ; and all the good she can do unto it, that doth she, even of a tender and motherly heart ; and yet through the frowardness and unruliness of the child, is she sometimes so moved and provoked, that she is angry with it, chideth it, rebuketh it, and beateth it. Even so were it the very nature and property of God to suffer no manner of misfortune to happen unto us, but yet through our manifold sins he is provoked to punish and chasten us.

Now as little as the mother denieth, forsaketh, or giveth over the child,

though she be angry with it and displease it, even as little doth God forsake or give over us in our need and necessity, misery and affliction, though he seem never so much to be displeased with us. Scripture for this have we; "If a mother can forget her child, then may I also forget thee, saith the Lord: but if she should forget her child, yet will I not forget thee." (Isaiah, xlix.)

There is never a schoolmaster, nor handycraftsman, which taketh any scholar or apprentice unto him to teach, but he will make these conditions with him expressly: that the lad shall not be self-willed nor stubborn, nor follow his own brain and mind, but with all possible diligence shall mark and take heed unto that which the master teacheth him; and if he will be negligent, or play the truant, and not give himself unto his business as he ought to do, if he, being his master, should beat and punish him therefor, that he be content to

take it patiently and with a good will. Now the master doth not correct and punish his scholar or servant for any intent to hurt him, or for any malice or evil will towards him, but only that he should learn better afterward, be more diligent, and take better heed. Even so likewise Christ receiveth no scholar or disciple unto him, but he maketh conditions with him most necessary for every Christian man, which are expressed in Matthew, xvi.

The word of God ought to be the only rule whereby we should be ordered; but we had rather to follow our own head and our own brain, by the means whereof oft-times we go awry, and miss the right way; and therefore the heavenly Schoolmaster knappeth us on the fingers, till we apprehend and learn his will more perfectly.

Likewise, the physician or surgeon must cut away and burn out the rotten and dead flesh with his iron and instrument, that the whole body be not infected and poisoned, and so perish:

even so doth God sometimes plague our bodies sharply and grievously, that our souls may be preserved and healed. And how deep soever God thrusteth his iron into our flesh and bodies, he doth it only to remedy and to heal us; and if it be so that he kill us, then will he bring us to the right life. The physician, in making of his trial, occupieth serpents and adders, and such-like poison, to drive out one poison with another: even so God, in afflicting and correcting of us, occupieth and useth the devil and wicked people, but yet all to do us good withal.

As long as the physician hath any hope of the recovery of his patient, he assayeth all manner of means and medicines with him, as well sour and sharp, as sweet and pleasant; but as soon as ever he beginneth to doubt of his recovery, he suffereth him to have and to take all manner of things whatsoever the patient himself desireth. Even so the heavenly Physician, as long as he taketh us Christians for his,

and hath any hope to recover or to heal us, he restraineth us from our will, and will not always suffer us to have what we most desire; but as soon as he hath no more hope of us, and giveth us over, then he suffereth us for a time to have and enjoy all our own will and pleasure. This similitude and comparison is taken out of the fifth chapter of Job: "If the Lord God doth wound, then doth his hand heal again; &c."

Furthermore, when a horse-breaker giveth unto a lusty fresh young horse too much of the bridle, he is wild and wanton, and goeth not well as he should do, and by chance in a slippery and sliding place he might fall head and legs over and over: even so, if our Creator and Maker should suffer us overmuch, and give us too large liberty, we should soon wax wild, and proud thereof; and it might happen that we should undo and destroy ourselves; therefore he giveth us a sharp bit in our mouths, and helpeth us to



bridle and to tame our flesh, that the noble and precious soul perish not.

Again, likeas the carter or poor man jirketh his horses with the whip, and striketh them sharply when they will not draw nor go forward, and yet favoureth and spareth them also, that he may enjoy them the longer; even so God striketh and whippeth us, when we do not right as we should do, and yet nevertheless spareth us, and will not make utterly an end of us.

Likeas the poor shepherd, also, when his foolish sheep stray abroad in the wild wilderness among the wolves, driveth them from strange ways into the right way, and hunteth them into their sure sheepfold, where they may be in safe guard; even so we likewise, forasmuch as we mix ourselves oft-times among the worldlings, and have fellowship with those that are enemies unto our Christian and true religion, therefore God cometh unto us, and driveth us with sorrow and repentance from them, that we should not be

destroyed, and perish together with them.

The herdman will suffer such calves as are appointed shortly to the slaughter, to run and spring about in the pasture at pleasure; and again, such as are reserved to labour are kept and used under the yoke: even so Almighty God doth suffer and permit unto those ungodly persons whose destruction is at hand, to have all pleasure and lust upon earth, and to fulfil and accomplish their pleasures and desires: but the godly, whom he will use to his honour and glory, those keepeth he under the yoke, and restraineth them from the pleasant lusts of the world.

A wise and skilful husbandman doth not cast nor sow his seed in a field or ground that is not broken, ploughed, and tilled as it ought to be, but he spanneth his oxen, and goeth to the field and casteth up the earth with his ploughshare, and so tilleth and harroweth it; and then first of all he

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soweth it, that if any rain fall the seed may be saved, driven into the earth, and take hold and wax therein. Even such an husbandman is God, and we are his tillage. (1 Cor. iii.) And he bestoweth not his spirit and truth upon such as are wild, and past all fear of God.

Moreover, likeas the gardener hedge-eth his garden roundabout, and fenceth it with thorns and briers, that no beasts nor noisome cattle hurt it; even so God defendeth, keepeth, and preserveth us from evil company, and from all manner of sin, through thorns and briers, that is to say, through the cross and afflictions, as Hosea saith (chap. ii.): "I will beset their ways with thorns, and their foot-paths will I hedge." If the gardener cut off the knobs and the crooked boughs from the trees in his garden, and loppeth them a little, yet as long as the roots remain the trees are never the worse, but wax nevertheless, and bring forth fruit: even so doth God lop and hew

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the crabby old Adam with the cross, not to the intent to hurt or harm us, but to keep us in awe, and to teach us godly manners. And surely, as long as the root of faith remaineth with us, though we be spoiled and destitute of all riches, and of all manner of worldly and bodily comfort, yet shall we bring forth good fruits to the high honour and glory of God's holy name. (John, xvi.)

Christian men without the cross are like unto grapes which hang upon the vines, and have the fruition of the open air, and remain still upon the stock unfruitful, and no man is the better for them.

Wherefore the heavenly Vine-man bringeth the Christians unto the wine-press, where they are beaten, pressed, stamped, and broken, not to their destruction, but that they may be delivered from the corruption and infection of worldly lusts, and may bring forth sweet wine, and bear pleasant fruits.

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The goldsmith casteth a lump of gold into the oven and into the fire, not to consume it away with the fire, but to purge it from the corruption that is in it; and that all that hangeth about it, and is no gold, should be burnt away with the fire, and consumed unto ashes: even so is God the goldsmith, the world the oven, affliction the fire, the faithful Christians the gold, and the filth and corruption is sin.

Now will God purge and make clean those that belong unto him from all manner of blots, blemishes, and corruption, and make them glorious and beautiful unto him.

The free-mason heweth the hard stones, and heweth off here one piece, and there another, till the stones be fit and apt for the place where he will lay them: even so God, the heavenly Free-mason, buildeth a Christian church, and he frameth and polisheth us, which are the costly and precious stones, with the cross and affliction,

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that all abomination and wickedness, which do not agree unto this glorious building, might be removed and taken out of the way. (1 Pet. ii.)

Again, as the dyer bleacheth, or the laundress washeth, beateth, lumpeth, and clappeth the foul, unclean, and defiled clothes, that they may so be white, pure, and clean; even so doth God some time handle and deal with us, to make us pure and clean. (Dan. vi.)

*Trouble and afflictions do serve to prove  
and to try us withal.*

#### THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Trouble and afflictions do prove, try, instruct, confirm, and strengthen the faith; provoke and stir up prayer; drive and force us to amendment of life, to the fear of God, to meekness, to patience, to constancy, to gentleness, to soberness and temperance, and to all manner of virtues; and are the occasion of exceeding much good,

as well transitory as eternal, in this world as in the world to come. By affliction and trouble will God prove and assay, mark and spy, how deep thy heart hath entered with God, how much thy faith is able to suffer and to bear, whether thou canst forsake both thyself and all other creatures in the world for his sake.

In summa, to be short, he will try how thou wilt behave thyself, when he taketh utterly from thee, and out of thy sight, that wherein thou most delightest and hast any pleasure upon earth. God knoweth well enough before how thou wilt take it, and behave thyself; but he will shew and declare to thyself and to other also, what is in thee; for oft-times people do so extol a man, and make such boast of him, to be the wisest, most circum-spect, manly, and honest man in a country; but when the time of trial cometh, there appeareth no such thing in him as was thought and looked for.

A man cannot learn to know a lusty

and a stout man of war in the time of peace, but best of all in the time of war, when the cruel and fierce enemies do invade and assault his captain.

When a great tempest ariseth in the sea, then doth it appear whether the shipmaster be cunning in ruling the stern or no. Again, those are the most honest and most chaste matrons, which being sore tempted, assaulted, and provoked unto wickedness, do nevertheless keep their spouse-faith towards their husbands undefiled. Even so can no man know nor prove perfectly how the Christian church keepeth her spouse-faith and fidelity towards her spouse and bridegroom Jesus Christ, until such time as antichrist assaulteth and tempteth her with false doctrine, tyranny, and persecution.

Such trees as have strong and deep roots, and sufficient natural sap, can no violent heat of the sun hurt nor harm; but such as are felled and cut down, are soon dried up with the heat of the sun, likeas the grass also that

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is mowed down doth soon wither: even so likewise such faithful persons as are rooted in Christ Jesus, cannot troubles nor afflictious hurt, they grow and wax green notwithstanding; but the unfaithful do betray themselves, and shew what they are, as soon as they see any heat of trouble or persecution coming. With one flail are both the stalks and ears of the corn beaten, and also the corn itself threshed and purged out: even so with one manner of trouble and affliction are the faithful purged and provoked to pray unto God, and to laud and magnify him, and the unfaithful also to murmur and curse; and so are they both tried, proved, and known.

When the corn is threshed, the kernel lieth mixed among the chaff, and afterwards are they dissevered asunder with the fan or windle: even so the people in the church do first hear the preaching of God's word; now some stumble, repine, and are offended at it, and other are not offended, and

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yet they dwell together one with another; but when they are fanned or windled, and when the wind of trouble and afflictions beginneth once a little to blow, then is it easy to sunder and to know the one from the other, the faithful from the unfaithful.

Art thou pure corn? What needest thou then to fear either the flail or the wind? In the threshing and in the wind thou shalt be delivered and sundered from the chaff, and shalt be made more pure than thou wast before. Let them fear that are chaff, which are not able to abide the wind, but must be blown away, and so cast out for ever.

A rotten and an old weak house standeth awhile for a time; but as soon as a wind cometh and bloweth, it appeareth unto all men how feeble the foundation and stay of it was.

Even so are there such Christian men without ground or foundation, which so long as all things go well and prosper with them, they are good Chris-

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tians; but in the time of trouble and persecution, their dissimulation is known and breaketh out. (Wisd. iii.)

As gold is tried in the oven, wherein it is molten; even so hath God tried and purged them. Now if thou be gold, what needest thou to fear the fire, which doth more profit than hinder or hurt thee?

To this purpose doth this true proverb serve: in need doth a man try which be his friends.

Examples: Almighty God did tempt and prove Abraham, and bade him offer up and kill his only son (Gen. xxii.): then was Abraham in a great distress, perplexity, and heaviness; he had rather have lost all his goods and possessions, and all that ever he had upon earth, than that he should slay his dear son. But yet, though it were against nature, and an intolerable thing, yet carried his son forth three days journey to kill him with his own hands: he overcame his flesh by faith, and would be obedient unto God. Then

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said God unto him, Now I know that thou fearest God, and hast not spared thy only dear son for my sake.

And Moses saith, "Remember all the ways through the which the Lord thy God hath led and guided thee these forty years in the wilderness, because he would chasten and prove thee, that it might appear and be known what was within thy heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no." (Deut. viii.)

Set Pharaoh and David together the one against the other, two notable kings; Pharaoh persevereth and continueth obstinately, stubbornly, and perversely in his wicked purpose, notwithstanding the manifold plagues that did fall and lighten upon him. (Exod. vii. viii. ix.) Contrariwise, how soon did David give over and break out with all meekness, submission, patience, and acknowledging of his whoredom, whenas he fled from Absalom, Shimei rebuking and reviling him most shamefully! (2 Sam. xvi.)

Job was stricken with many grievous sores, that there was nothing sound or whole in him, from the sole of his foot to the top of his head; not that he had deserved such heavy punishment more than other men, but that God would declare to all the world his patience and faithfulness. But his wife did then shew her weak faith and wicked corrupt nature. (Job, i. ii.)

Who was more faithful and more fervent than Peter? and yet he denied and forsook Christ before a simple woman. (Matt. xxvi.) Who ought not therefore to fear himself, except he hath before in the trial been found faithful, steadfast, and constant?

In like manner daily experience teacheth us to know the faithful and unfaithful asunder in persecution and affliction. There are some that cleave to the Gospel for a time; but when they see they cannot attain that they sought and looked for, then they forsake it, and fall from it again, yea, and in the time of temptation they fall to

blasphemy of the holy Gospel; but the godly, which have it fixed in their hearts, stand steadfastly by God both in life and death.

*Trouble and affliction do help and further us to the knowledge of ourselves, and of God also, and especially to wisdom.*

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Besides this, it is a profitable and a good thing for a man to know himself well.

Felicity and prosperity blindeth a man; but when he is under the cross he beginneth to mark the frailness of his body, the uncertainty of his life, the feebleness of his understanding, the infirmity and weakness of his own strength and power.

He shall spy and perceive how far he is entered in the way of virtue, how the matter standeth between God and him, whether he be a champion of God or of the devil; for a man think-

eth himself oft-times to be well grounded and stablished, but in the time of temptation he feeleth how lightly and easily he is tossed and turned of every blast of the wind.

Item, by affliction and misfortune God will put thee in remembrance how many thousand perils are yet hanging over thy head, which should lighten and fall upon thee, if he did not keep and preserve thee from them. And the same God saith thus unto thee: The wicked enemy, with an innumerable and infinite heap of all evils and mischiefs, doth assault thee, and lay watch for to subdue thee, and to swallow thee up; but I have appointed him his bounds, over the which he cannot pass.

The longer thou art under the cross, the better mayest thou learn all the virtues and goodness of God; as his just judgment and strait justice, whereby he sheweth his wrath and displeasure against the wicked and ungodly, and sendeth upon their necks terrible

plagues; and the obstinate and unrepentant he condemneth everlastingly.

Item, his infinite power, whereby he can help and comfort thee in most extreme misery and necessity.

Item, his immutable truth, whereby he doth faithfully perform all his promises, and bringeth to pass all his threatenings.

Item, his exceeding mercy and free grace, whereby he preventeth all evil towards us, and will not suffer us to be caught and oppressed with any misfortune.

Item, his eternal and everlasting providence, whereby like a father he taketh charge and care over us, and governeth all things most wisely. (1 Pet. v.)

Item, his glory, magnificence, and lauds for the foresaid virtues, which do shine most clearly in affliction and adversity; for the which cause St. Bernard writeth thus: Whereby we do know that He that dwelleth above is among us here beneath, forsooth by



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this, that we do stick in trouble and afflictions. For who could be able to sustain, bear, and abide them without God?

A man hath need at all times of wisdom, circumspection, prudence, and soberness. Likeas prosperity shutteth and blindeth the eyes of men, even so doth adversity and trouble open them.

Likeas the salve that remedieth the disease of the eyes doth first bite and grieve the eyes, and maketh them to water, but yet afterward the eyesight is clearer and more sharp than it was; even so trouble and affliction doth grieve and vex men wonderfully at the first, but afterward it helpeth and lighteneth the eyes of the mind, that it is afterward more reasonable, wise, and circumspect.

For trouble bringeth experience, and experience bringeth wisdom. The rod and punishment do bring wisdom. (Eccles. xxxiii. Prov. xxix.) And of this did these proverbs first spring up: The

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more plentiful land, the more foolish and wicked people; and again, Adversity causeth men to look well and far about them; item, There is no man wise, but with his hurt and loss; item, That man may well learn to swim, which hath the water at his mouth. David saith, "O Lord, how good and profitable is it unto me, that thou hast chastened and humbled me, that I might learn thy righteousness and thy commandments!" (Psa. cxix.)

*Trouble and afflictions do help and further us to the right knowledge of our sins, and to perfect sorrow and repentance for them.*

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

God requireth that the knowledge of our poisoned and corrupt nature, and of the wrath of God, should wax and increase in us, whereby we might conceive an hearty sorrow and repentance for our sins, and so daily amend and wax better. Now truth it is, that

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in our hearts naturally sticketh a rough secureness and retchlessness, whereby we do little regard and esteem the inward filthiness of our hearts; and especially when we feel no manner of taste of the cross and affliction, we do not consider the miserable wretchedness of our sins, nor the just judgment of God, and the terrible punishment due for the same.

But when the hand of God doth humble and pluck down some special persons or a whole congregation, then remember we the greatness and heaviness of sin, that God's wrath and indignation is not too sore, without some special and most just causes.

And then break we out into such words as these: "O Lord, we have deserved these plagues a thousand ways. O good and most just God, thou rewardest the misdeeds and transgressions of the fathers in the children, if they follow their fathers' steps, even unto the third and fourth generation." (Exod. xx. xxxiv. Numb. xiv. Dent. v.)

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Likeas the hard copper and tin do melt in the fire, even so in trouble and affliction the hard, rough, and stubborn hearts do melt and fall to misliking and loathing their sins.

A trespasser doth then first of all perceive his faults rightly, when he is brought unto the judgment to be punished, and is adjudged and condemned unto death. And for this cause doth God use such rough and hard means with us. And both the common and general, and also the particular and special plagues and adversities, may well be called a part of God's law, and, as it were, God's preaching, which testify and declare unto us, that God is heavily displeased with all manner of wickedness and abomination that reigneth in the world, that all men should humble and submit themselves unto God, bewail and lament their sins unto him with a sorrowful and a right penitent heart, and desire his grace and mercy.

For an example: Joseph's brethren

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in Egypt did then first of all spy their wickedness committed against their brother, whenas very need and necessity did vex them in a strange country. (Gen. xlii.) Whenas the Lord did send into the wilderness, among the Israelites, venomous serpents, which did bite them, and set them on fire; then came they first to Moses, and said, We have sinned, forasmuch as we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee. (Num. xxi.)

When the pestilence did rage, then said David unto the Lord, Behold, it is I that have sinned; what have these sheep done? (1 Chron. xxi.) Now, therefore, if it be so that knowledge of the sin, and an hearty displeasure against it, be profitable and necessary, then can we not well forbear trouble and adversity.

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*Trouble, affliction, and adversity, do help and further us to the exercising and increasing of our faith.*

#### THE TENTH CHAPTER.

That our faith is proved and tried through the cross, and through adversity, it is declared before. And now shall it be evidently proved, that our faith is then first right stablished, exercised, and augmented, when adversity cometh. The very true Christian faith is grounded only upon the grace, mercy, power, and help of God through Christ. Which thing cannot be right comprehended with vain thoughts, imaginations, and speculations; but God cometh upon the miserable sinners with heaps of miseries. Whatsoever they attempt, go about, or take in hand, it goeth backward with them, and their whole life is made so bitter as gall unto them, that they can no where find any rest.

And why? forsooth it is done for

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this purpose, that they should utterly neglect and despise all manner of counsel and comfort of man; that they should be plucked from all manner of trust in the policies and powers of the world; and that they should utterly despair of all help in any creature. And instead of that they should set and fix their hearts and minds only in God, and that nothing at all should else remain in them, but only unspeakable sighing unto God, proceeding out of a true faith, in whose help and mercy only it altogether consisteth.

Testimonies of Scripture: Moses witnesseth that God suffered the Israelites to be diversely vexed, and to be brought into great distress, and yet preserved them wonderfully; for this cause, that when they should come into the land of promise, they should not say, Mine own power, and the strength of mine own hands, were able to bring this to pass; but thou shouldst think upon the Lord thy God, for he it is which giveth thee such

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power, whereby thou art able to perform and bring any thing to pass. (Deut. viii.)

And so did God deal afterward with the children of Israel, which of their own brain and wisdom sought help, succour, and maintenance, at the king of the Assyrians, and at the king of Egypt, which were the very same that afterward did besiege them, slay them, and carry them away prisoners.

And so after that they felt and proved that there was none that could succour and help them, but only the Lord, unto whom they yielded and gave over themselves at length; as, I looked for no other but that I should die. (Jer. x. Hosea, ii. iv. vi.) But it was done for this purpose, that we should not put any trust in ourselves, but in God, which raiseth up the dead again. (2 Cor. i.)

Item: Whatsoever stirreth up and exerciseth our faith, of that ought we not to be afraid, but rather to rejoice in it. When we live in idleness, in

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all lusts and pleasures, the devil snappeth us up, and so blindeth us in our weakness, that we think God doth not regard us, and all things in the world to happen without any working or foresight of God. But as well in special as general adversities, there is greater matter and occasion to practise and to exercise the faith.

God suffereth thee to fall into poverty, or thy most dear friends to be taken from thee by death, or some other disquietness to happen unto thee. As then hast thou a great occasion to awake and to practise thy faith; and first to call to remembrance the promises of God, contained in his word, and then to call upon him for his grace and assistance, and so to resist and withstand all manner of natural doubtfulness and despair, that hangeth in this flesh, how grievous soever the necessity seem to be, and howsoever any man doth imagine that God hath withdrawn his face from thee, and will not help thee at all.

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In like manner, in all common necessities and general, this is the right exercise of faith, and the most holy service of God, that we first consider and weigh earnestly all manner of perils and assaults of the church, and of the commonwealth. And after that, that we pray unto God with a constant and a lively faith, that he will deliver and preserve the church from false doctrine, superstition, and hypocrisy, and that he will graciously rule and govern it.

And that he will also preserve the commonwealth in good order and quietness, and will grant wholesome air and seasonable weather, and will also restrain and let the wild and dissolute behaviour and conversation of the common sort of people; and will grant, maintain, and preserve a Christian discipline, behaviour, and honesty, whereby his holy and godly name may be lauded and magnified, his kingdom augmented, increased, and con-

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firmed, and the kingdom of the devil subverted and confounded.

And remember this also, whensoever thou considerest thy adversity, forget not to desire of God, hope and trust for comfort, aid, and security; and look that thou strive and fight mightily and manfully against all manner of mistrust, and put away all manner of despair, how grievously soever thy adversity and sorrow doth increase; and thus is thy faith well rightly practised and exercised.

An example: from holy Job was taken all that ever any man might take any comfort in: wife, children, goods, and friends; and one trouble, sorrow, and heavy message came still in another's neck, and he had not one drop of blood in his body that was not consumed and wasted. And he sat in the sight of all the world, was their laughing-stock, and so exercised and practised his faith, and gave over himself wholly and only unto God. (Job, i. ii. iii.)

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Unto Abraham was promised a seed, which should be in multitude as the sand of the sea, and as the stars of the sky (Gen. xii. xviii. Eccles. xlv.) ; and yet was his wife barren and unfruitful, and he also waxen old and aged, that after the judgment of natural reason it was not possible that that promise should be fulfilled and come to pass, by the means whereof Abraham did exercise, try, and practise his faith. (Gen. xxxvii. xxxix. xl. xli.)

And thus did Joseph, David, Daniel, all patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, as well in the common and general adversities of the church, as in their own private and peculiar afflictions, exercise and practise their faith; and this was their highest God's service, wherewith they honoured and served God. (2 Sam. xv. Dan. iii. vi.)

Wherefore in our time also God giveth us great and marvellous occasion, through trouble and adversity, to awake, stir up, and to exercise our faith. And by such exercise is the

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faith increased and confirmed; yea, and shineth more brightly, and is made more beautiful and glorious. For whatsoever a man hath proved and tried himself, then believeth he afterward the more steadfastly. Now he that is a Christian man or woman proveth and feeleth indeed, that in the midst of his sorrow and affliction he is ruled, defended, comforted, and preserved of God; for hope cannot be confounded.

And therefore the Christian and the faithful man, through trouble and adversity, is made more bold and hearty, and concludeth with himself, more than ever he did before, that God hath a special regard and consideration of those that are in trouble and misery, and will graciously help and deliver them out.

Likeas one that hath sailed oft upon the sea, and proved and escaped great and dangerous tempests, and hath been sore tossed with the fearful waves, is afterward the more bold and hardy

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to go unto the sea, forasmuch as he hath ever escaped well, and hath had good fortune before; even so a Christian man, whom the cross hath oft assaulted and exercised, forasmuch as he hath always found comfort, aid, and help of God, afterward he trusteth God, the longer the more, though the same affliction and adversity come again unto him that he had before.

And to this purpose hear and mark two especial and notable examples: one out of the Old, and another out of the New Testament. David, when he prepared himself to fight against the valiant giant Goliath, said these words: "The Lord, which hath delivered me from a lion and from a bear, shall deliver me also from this Philistine." (1 Sam. xvii.) And again, Paul saith, "God hath delivered us from so great a death, and delivereth us daily, and we hope that he will deliver us from henceforth also." (2 Cor. i.)

And to the same purpose doth this also appertain, to consider that the

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cross assureth those that bear it in the Lord, of the grace and favour of God, whereby they know certainly that they are of the number of the elect, and the children of God, forasmuch as he looketh upon them fatherly, to reform and to correct them. (Job, v. Hos. vi. Prov. iii. Tobit, xii. 1 Pet. iv. Heb. xii. Rev. iii.)

For why, thus it is written : Yea all those that ever did please God have been proved and tried by many and divers troubles, and have been found constant and steadfast in faith. Item: All those that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution and affliction. (2 Tim. iii. Eccles. ii. Psalm xxxiii.)

*Trouble and adversity giveth us occasion to pray unto God, and to laud and praise him.*

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Every Christian man knoweth this, that it is necessary and profitable for

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him to pray and to call upon God most fervently and devotedly. Now when a man liveth in all prosperity, then he prayeth very little, or very slenderly and coldly, he hath no great affection or mind upon it.

That prayer that is not pressed and thrust out with the cross, floweth not out from the depth and bottom of the heart.

But sorrow, heaviness, and adversity, kindleth the mind and setteth it on fire ; driveth, chaseth, and hunteth it unto God, and compelleth it to call upon God fervently and earnestly ; for at such time we feel and perceive well that we can do nothing of ourselves, and what great need we have of God, that he will vouchsafe to govern, aid, and defend us.

Likeas the water, as long as it floweth and runneth over the even, plain, wide, and broad fields, breaketh not out by any violence, but disperseth and spreadeth itself abroad every where alike : but when it is gathered together.



by cunning and science, and conveyed into a narrow room, as into a pipe or conduit, then it springeth or spouteth out on high : even so the mind of man, as long as it is quiet, idle, and without sorrow or trouble, it walketh and wandereth abroad at large and at liberty ; but when it is brought in, restrained, and driven to a strait and a narrow issue through trouble and adversity, it breaketh out aloft to God in heaven with an earnest, hearty, and fervent prayer for grace, aid, and comfort. (Eccles. xxxv. Acts, x.)

Whereupon there is a common proverb sprung : Need and necessity teacheth men to pray. "O Lord, when trouble and adversity is at hand, then do men seek thee: when thou chastisest and punishest them, then call they upon thee lamentably." (Isaiah, xxvi.) Examples : when the children of Israel heard of the coming of their enemies the Philistines, they were afraid, and said unto Samuel, "Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for

us, that he may help us out of the hands of the Philistines." (1 Sam.) Manasses, which all the days of his life was a very bloodhound and a tyrant, was bound with chains, and led away into Babylon. And when he was in extreme anguish and necessity, he made his humble prayer and supplication before the Lord his God ; and God heard his humble prayer, and brought him again to Jerusalem. (2 Kings. 2 Chron. xxxiii.)

When there arose a great tempest upon the sea, insomuch that the ship was overwhelmed with the waves, and Christ slept, then the disciples hastened unto him, and waked him up, saying, "Lord, help us, for we perish." (Matt. viii. Mark, iv.)

The example of the heathen woman doth teach thee how the Lord prolongeth and deferreth his aid and help some time for the nonce that we should be kindled up to cry the more fervently, and to continue importunately in earnest prayer.

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St. Austin writeth thus : They that are godly are oppressed and vexed in the church or congregation for this purpose, that when they are pressed they should cry, and when they cry that they should be heard, and when they are heard, that they should laud and praise God,

And likeas the cross and adversity doth further and prick us forward unto the first part of prayer, which is to desire and crave of God : even so doth it also further and provoke us all unto the second part of prayer, which is to love God, and to give him thanks.

The almighty power, wisdom, righteousness, mercy, and truth of God, these high and excellent godly virtues, worthy of all laud and honour, do appear in the cross, affliction, and adversity of Christian men, when God visiteth miserable sinners, comforteth those that are in distress and misery, helpeth and delivereth them out of all manner of necessity.

At these things do all Christian

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people wonder and marvel highly, and therefore break they out to magnify, praise, and extol God, with unspeakable laud and praises.

We have such a treasure in earthly vessels, that the power that lieth above, and hath the victory, might appear to be of God, and not of us. (2 Cor. iv.) That is to say, we are weak and miserable vessels, that God's honour and glory should be furthered, and not ours.

For an example take the story of Daniel, chap. iii. : how the imprisonment and captivity of the Jews did serve wondrously to the glory and praise of God. Our Saviour Christ sheweth the cause why the man was blind from his very nativity and birth, namely, that the works of God should appear and be made manifest in him. (John, ix.)

Moreover, all the prophets, apostles, and elect of God, by whom God wrought wonderful and marvellous things, were contemned and despised,

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yea, and sometimes slain and murdered, that all men might spy and perceive, that their faith and working, which did not shrink, but continued upright, was a work of God, and no power of man, and, therefore, that God must be lauded and praised above all. (Psalm xlv. Acts, iv. v. Rom. viii. 2 Cor. iv. 1 Mac. ii. 2 Mac. vi. vii.)

*Trouble and adversity do further us  
to virtue and godliness.*

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The cross and tribulation do banish and dry away the former sins, and hinder and resist those that are to come hereafter, and help to plant, exercise, and increase all manner of virtues, that the ungodly may be provoked and furthered to repentance, and amendment, and reformation of their lives, and the godly to further virtue and godliness. For what affliction soever the flesh doth suffer, it grieveth it very

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sore ; it would rather be merry, at rest and quiet.

Now every one that hath any reason, knoweth this right well, that he through his own lusts and behaviour bringeth much adversity and affliction upon his own neck ; and therefore, in consideration of that, he beginneth to beware, and to take heed afterward of all inordinate and dissolute living, as the cause, ground, and occasion of all misery and sorrow, that, besides this present affliction, he be not plagued also eternally. Which I will declare and prove, first with similitude ; secondarily, with testimonies of the holy Scripture ; and, thirdly, by familiar examples.

A water that is continually standing, how clear soever it seem, yet it is corrupt and naught. But that water which hath his continual course, the more it rusheth and struggleth over the stones and sands, the more lively, fresh, and better it is : even so a godly man, in the absence of the cross, is sluggish,

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dull, and litherly, but through the cross and affliction he is quickened and exercised, and increased in all goodness. The rusty and cankered iron, through the file is made bright and smooth: even so the old rusty Adam hath need of trouble and adversity to file and purge him from the cankered rust of sin.

A knife, though it be ever so smooth, if it be not used, it waxeth rusty, and the same rust fretteth it and marreth it; but the more it is occupied, though it be somewhat worn thereby, yet it is the more bright: even so, although some person hath a good nature and inclination, if he be not occupied and exercised with trouble and adversity, he waxeth rusty, cankered, and rotten; but through the cross and tribulation, though the rust have worn somewhat of him, being a man and weak, yet he shall thereby be made more bright, clear, and beautiful again.

The seed that is cast into the field must suffer the wind, rain, snow, frost,

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and all manner of tempests, and yet it waxeth and bringeth forth fruit; even so the spiritual seed, which is the word of God, being received of a devout and fervent heart, is not destroyed through trouble, but bringeth forth right good and profitable fruit. A walnut-tree, the more it is beaten the better it is, and not the worse: even so man, through many stripes and much adversity, turneth from ill, and waxeth good.

For the thick and hard skin of an horse or an ass, is nothing better than a very sharp whip, to jerk him with: even so, for our stubborn and haughty flesh, there is nothing more fit and profitable than much sorrow and vexation, whereby it may be stirred and pricked forward. Cloth must be oft beaten and brushed, whereupon there is a proverb: thus must woollen cloth be used, that there breed no moths in it. Even so shall spiritual moths and worms, wickedness, sin, and abomination, have the less power to breed in

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us, if we be well brushed and beaten in time with affliction and adversity.

The flesh that cometh fresh out of the shambles unsalted, waxeth soon unsavoury, and worms breed in it, but the salt with his sharpness keepeth it sweet from corruption: even so doth God cast and sprinkle salt upon us, through divers temptations and afflictions, that they may bite and season us, that we corrupt not, nor perish in sin.

That body that is always idle, and never moveth nor hath no exercise, is easily subject unto sickness and infirmities; but those bodies that have their exercise and labour, are more lusty and sound, and can better continue: even so the soul that is well exercised and occupied with trouble and affliction, hath occasion and cause to be beautiful, sound, and clear.

It is a very true saying, the sharper that the lie is, the cleaner taketh it away all manner of filth: even so our corrupt and poisoned nature had need

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of a sharp and a biting medicine. The greater and sharper the trouble and adversity is, the more filth and inconvenience it biteth away. For a raw and weak stomach, which is of a naughty digestion, bitter wormwood is very good and wholesome: even so for the weak and feeble soul is bitter trouble and affliction very wholesome and necessary.

Remember this proverb: after the sick man hath recovered his sore, he liveth worse than ever he did before. And therefore sickness is more necessary for him, that he wax not worse, and live not more wickedly.

Now will I allege Scripture. God threateneth to send a plague sevenfold greater, if any man will not amend at the lighter and easier punishment, that he sent first. Whereby the Lord himself declareth, through Moses, that trouble and adversity should teach us an alteration and amendment of our lives. (Lev. xxvi.)

Strokes and wounds do purge and

cleanse our evil and corruption, and stripes purify the inward parts of man. (Prov. xx.) No manner of chastening for the present time seemeth to be joyous, but heavy and grievous; but afterward it bringeth a quiet fruit of righteousness unto those that are exercised therein. (Heb. xii.)

He that suffereth in the flesh ceaseth from sin, that from henceforth (the time that is remnant in the flesh) he may live not after the lusts of men, but after the will of God. (2 Pet. iv. Rom. vi. 1 John, ii.) And this shall example make more manifest. Under Joshua had the children of Israel many battles, and were driven to fight against their enemies; and they did never fall nor swerve from the Lord, until afterward that they came unto rest, and had all things plenty. (Joshua, i. Judith, ii.)

This is an example of a whole multitude. Now take examples of special persons.

The Prophet Jonah, being in the whale's belly, remembered his sins, al-

tered himself, turned, and was obedient unto God. (Jonah, ii.) The lost and desperate son did then first of all run home again unto his father, when he saw and felt his misery and poverty. (Luke, xv.)

Mark the daily experience. We imagine oft-times thus with ourselves: Oh, if I were once whole and restored again, I would surely behave and order myself well as I ought to do, and would help and serve every man. Oh, if I were rich, I would gladly distribute unto the poor people faithfully. But as soon as we come out of the danger indeed, we have clean forgotten altogether.

As long as we have no manner of need, no man can hinder or restrain our wickedness.

For an example, imagine two sundry houses; whereof in the one is celebrate and kept a marriage, where there is mirth, joy, and good cheer. And in the other is one sick on his death-bed. In the bride-house, where

is dancing, is used all manner of lightness and dissoluteness, gross and filthy words, bawdy songs and ballads, shameless behaviour and manners, and wanton and light apparel. One leapeth and winceth like an horse; another stampeth like an ass; the third drinketh himself drunk; and the fourth doeth nothing that honest is; so that a man might say the people were become very brute beasts. But by him that lieth on his death-bed is all still, not a word spoken, but honest and seemly. All things are done sadly, demurely, and discreetly.

And at that time not only the men, but also the women and children, and all that are in the house, are godly occupied; they pray, they comfort, and break out into such words as these: What is man? How transitory and vain are all things that we have here upon earth! but in the life to come it shall be far otherwise. (Eccles. xiv. Job, iv. x. xxxiv. Psal. lxxviii. xc. ciii. cxlvi, Isaiah, xl.)

Again, from the marriage or bride-house goeth many on home heavy and sad, vexed in his mind, and disdainful, that he is not so happy and fortunate as other be; and suddenly is ravished with the beauty of some wife or maiden that he saw at the dancing, which hath wounded and stricken him to the heart. And when he cometh home, he looketh sourly on his wife, he is froward toward his children, and testy against all the household, so that no man can please him.

But he that goeth home from the mourning-house, thinketh himself well blessed and happy that he himself lieth not in any such extreme necessity. If he hath had any sickness or vexation in time past, now he is able to bear it the more easily and patiently, when he compareth it to the grievous and intolerable pain of the man that lieth in pangs of death. By reason whereof he is the more patient, gentle, and friendly towards his wife, children, and his whole household; yea, he taketh

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occasion thereby to reform and amend his evil life.

*Sorrow and affliction do help and further us toward the fear and love of God.*

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Trouble and affliction do engender the fear of God in them which suffer it, and in other likewise which do hear and know of it; so that many take example and instruction thereby, and afterward attempt not any thing timorously and rashly against the will and pleasure of God. For He is lawfully to be feared and dreaded which can bring and lay upon us all manner of plagues, and also hath just cause and right toward us so to do. (Matt. x.)

Now we, being feeble and weak, are in no wise able to resist and withstand the strong and mighty God: no; we are not able to withstand or put off the least ill day of an ague; yea, we cannot choose but suffer he least and

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most contemptuous and feeble creatures to plague and disquiet us, as lice, fleas, flies, and such-like vermin, which did master and overcome the mighty Pharaoh, king of Egypt. (Exod. vii. viii. ix. x. 2 Mac. ix. Acts, xii.)

It is a very true proverb, a burnt hand dreadeth the fire. For in the same sense and meaning spake Moses unto the fearful people: "God is come to tempt and prove you, that the fear of him may be before your eyes, to consider and remember that ye sin not." (Exod. xx. Deut. viii. and xiii. Judges, ii. and iii.)

As for an example: the more the Lord did exercise and hunt about David, the more diligently did he look upon the Lord, and feared him. (1 Sam. xv.) And not only David, but others also, when they saw and perceived their misery and wretchedness, they took occasion thereby to fear God more than they did before; and specially when they saw afterward how God punished David's manslaughter



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and whoredom with sedition, uproar, murder, and with loss of much people. (2 Sam. xi. xiii. xiv. xv. xvi. &c.)

Holy Scripture setteth before our eyes divers like terrible examples, that we should not esteem the fear of God for a light thing, but should be afraid of all manner of wickedness, sin, and abomination.

When a trespasser is led out to be beheaded, hanged, burnt, or otherwise to be punished, others that see him do learn to fear and to beware of that thing which brought him to his last end: even so when God sendeth any plague either upon some special person, or else upon some whole community, all other ought so to consider the same, as though they themselves were in the place of the afflicted person, as though his trouble and sorrow were their own, that they may the rather fear God, and take heed that they fall not into like vengeance of God. And in very deed, as well the good

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and faithful, as the wicked and unfaithful, have cause to fear. (Prov. xi.)

For the faithful can consider thereby, that these transitory plagues are tokens and evident testimonies of the eternal punishments that are to come, which are a thousand thousand times more grievous, and never have end. (1 Pet. iv.) Therefore both their own and other men's afflictions and sorrows do give them occasion enough to redress and forsake that thing, whereby all men do bring eternal plagues upon their necks.

The wicked and unfaithful, if they be not utterly obstinate and perverse, but have any use of reason at all, do also begin to fear God, and to think thus with themselves: If God visiteth, scourgeth, and assaulteth with trouble and vexation the good and faithful, which are nothing so wicked as we, how shall it then go with us, which have deserved ten, yea, twenty times more grievous punishment than

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they? (Jer. xxv. xlix. Ezek. ix. Prov. xiii. 1 Pet. iv.)

Mark and behold. I begin to plague the city whereunto my name is given: think ye then that ye shall escape free and unpunished? ye shall not go quit and free. (Jer. xxv.)

If this be done in the green wood, what shall be done in the dry? (Luke, xxiv.) It is time that judgment begin at the house of God: seeing then it beginneth first with us, what an end shall they have which believe not the Gospel of God! (Matt. xi. 1 Pet. iv. Luke, x. xi.)

An innocent dog that hath not offended, is beaten before the lion; that the lion, when he knoweth that he hath angered and displeased his master, should be put in the more fear. St. Gregory writeth thus: If God striketh those so sore whom he favoureth, how sharply and sore will he strike them which he favoureth not!

The crucified and afflicted Christians do love God the more fervently,

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forasmuch as in the midst of the cross they feel the sweet comfort that cometh from their heavenly Father, of whose merciful will they cannot doubt nor mistrust.

A dog that is of a good nature, if his master strike him, yet he loveth his master notwithstanding, and fawneth again upon him. A good child, although it be beaten, yet it loveth the father or mother nevertheless, and desireth to have their favour again: even in like manner are the true Christians minded toward their heavenly Father; but such children as bewicked, and of an evil disposition, when they be a little scourged, they run away from their fathers, and murmur against them.

*Trouble and affliction is good and profitable to teach men patience, meekness, and lowliness.*

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Pride is a dangerous thing, whereof cometh no manner of good. Now

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felicity and prosperity all at pleasure, engendereth pride and contempt of other people ; but the cross and affliction engendereth meekness and lowliness, that a man is not too proud in his own conceit, but is content that other be esteemed as well as he, confessing himself to have need of their help and counsel.

Likeas men use to clip and to cut shorter the feathers of birds or other fowls, when they begin to fly too high or too far from them : even so doth God diminish our riches, possessions, estimation, honour, authority, and power, that we should not pass our bounds, and glory too much of such gifts. Likeas the body, when it is wearied and consumed with labour and travail, desireth ease and rest, that it may lie still : even so the soul, being laden and oppressed with trouble and affliction, is brought to a narrow issue, and then it hasteth after rest and quietness, and nothing vexeth it less than pride.

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Nebuchadnezzar did glory of his power, victorious acts, and costly buildings, and was wonderfully proud of them ; but after his fall and adversity he learned to ascribe all praise, honour, and glory unto God. (Dan. iv.) Paul confesseth that a buffet was given him of the messenger of Satan, that he should not glory out of measure in the abundance of revelation. (2 Cor. xii.) Experience itself teacheth, that when rich, famous, notable, and proud men are robbed and spoiled of their goods, they are afterward more humble, meek, and gentle ; for then they perceive the uncertainty and unstableness of temporal and transitory things, and so learn, the longer they live, the less to trust themselves. Therefore trouble and affliction is oft-times as necessary unto men as meat and drink.

The cross, adversity, and affliction make a man soft, tame, patient, sober, loving, and friendly, both towards himself and towards all other also.

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A piece of iron or of silver stricken or beaten with a hammer waxeth broader, thinner, smoother, and softer: even so the stony and hard hearts of men through heaviness and adversity, are made more buxom and pliant, that a man may wind them (as a man might say) even round about his finger.

A curst wild colt hath a snaffle put in his mouth, that he bite not him that handleth him: even so the snaffle of the cross and adversity doth let and hinder us (being froward, furious, and full of spite, malice, and vengeance), that we commit the less wickedness, abomination, and uncharitableness in our lives.

For an example: the furious raging king Manasses was meek, still, and tame enough, after that he was once bound, taken prisoner, and led away captive. (2 Kings, xxi. 2 Chron. xxxiii.)

Paul before Damascus was stricken down as a raging and avenging wolf;

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but he rose up again a meek lamb.  
(Acts, ix.)

*Trouble and adversity is good to teach  
men pity, compassion, and patience  
towards other.*

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

To have pity and compassion of people that are in misery and distress; is a Christian and a necessary virtue; but he that never felt temptation, adversity, or affliction himself, can have but little pity and compassion of other. One sick man can tell the lack and necessity of another, one poor man likewise of another; and also one that is in misery and affliction himself, knoweth the better the grief of another that is in like case.

As for an example: why and for what cause can our High Priest Christ have such pity and compassion upon us miserable wretches, that we dare be bold to come unto him cheerfully without fear, and to look for succour, help,

and comfort at his hands? Forsooth, even for this cause and by this means, as saith St. Paul, that he was also tempted, and suffered most bitter pain and grief himself. (Heb. xv.) And very experience doth teach even the self-same thing also. For whosoever hath once lain sick in a spittal-house himself, can have the more compassion of other that are in like case afterwards, and is ever after the more ready and prompt to help those that be in such case.

The noble and precious virtue called patience hath no place to put her head in the time of prosperity. When a man hath been a long season healthful and without any manner of sickness, he cannot take sickness by and by so patiently as he ought to do; and likewise he that never felt any affliction or adversity, whensoever any happen unto him, he is sore vexed with impatientness.

But adversity teacheth men patience, and practiseth them therein.

First, when a man seeth that all goeth backward and against him, and that it will be no better, but rather worse and worse; what doth he, but of this necessity maketh a virtue, and so is content, and at a point, howsoever it goeth with him?

Secondly, when a man is continually used to trouble and affliction, this same use and custom maketh it light and easy unto him, especially considering that God will also help, aid, and comfort him. Paul saith, "Trouble or affliction bringeth patience, and patience bringeth experience, &c;" (Rom. v.) The desperate and lost son learned such patience in his misery and affliction, that he said to his father, "Take nor use me not from henceforth as a son, but as an hired servant. I desire no more but that I may remain in thy house." (Luke, xv.) Even so ought we also to suffer all things willingly and patiently, whatsoever they be, so that God will not banish and put us out of his house.

Unto that noble heathen man Socrates did his curst and shrewd wife serve for this use and purpose, that he learning patience at home, might the better suffer, and the more patiently bear the people that he had to do with abroad.

*Trouble and adversity maketh men hard and strong, and teacheth them soberness and temperance.*

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

An ox getteth himself harder hoofs upon rough, stubble, and crabbed ground, and is able to draw and to labour better, than if he were fed in rank pasture. Those children that are nursed by fostermen's fires are for the most part more hard and strong than they which are daintily brought up in all excess, and wantonness, and superfluity, in their own fathers' houses. Even so the wits and minds of men, through pleasure and abundance, wax tender and weak, and effeminate and

wild; but being restrained through some painful necessity and affliction, they wax harder, stronger, and more manly and sober. For an example: the dear holy Apostles, the more persecution and affliction they had, the more bold, strong, and constant were they, as the Acts of the Apostles do testify throughout.

Paul saith, "I am content and think myself well in infirmities, in rebukes, in persecutions, in anguishes, for Christ's sake; for when I am in such weakness, then am I strong." (2 Cor. xii.) The physician, when he perceiveth that his patient will eat over-much, and will wax too fat, he measureth and restraineth him, and by breaking somewhat from him he restoreth him to his health again, and so saveth him: even so, when we do shamefully misuse wine, corn, bread, and drink, and other gifts and creatures of God, to maintain drunkenness, surfeiting, excess, and riot, then doth God punish us with hunger, dearth,

penury, and with other plagues, that we should learn thereby to be temperate, and to keep measure, and to use his benefits thankfully. It is said, the hour of punishment and of correction maketh us to forget all manner of pleasure and lust. (Eccles. xi.) As David soon forgot his lusty pleasures and wantonness utterly, when Absalom drave him out of his kingdom. (1 Sam. xiii.)

*Trouble and adversity teacheth men to contemn, despise, and defy the world, and to be diligent and fervent in all godliness and virtue.*

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

The cross and adversity taketh from us all love of the world, and draweth away all manner of dangerous and delicious lusts and pleasures of this transitory life. We would fain be rich, but God giveth us poverty; we desire health of body, but God giveth us sickness, and so nurtureth and nurseth

us in misery and with affliction, that we can no more tell what a delicious and tender pleasant life in this world meaneth; and thus begin we to contemn and loath all transitory things, and to desire another, better, more precious, and eternal life, where all manner of misery shall have an end.

He that taketh a journey in hand, and goeth into a strange country, when he cometh into a pleasant town, where he meeteth merry company and good companions, peradventure he spendeth away the time, and tarrieth too long among them, and so forgetteth his household and things at home. But if one hard mischance after another happen unto him, then he maketh the more haste home again to his wife and children, where he hath more rest and quietness.

Even so when these transitory things, as riches, health, beauty, much profit, honour, and dignity happen unto us, if we will once gape upon them and delight so much in them,

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that we do the less regard and esteem the heavenly life; then will God make the way rough and crabbed unto us here in this life, that we should not take and esteem this transitory life in this world for our right natural country, towards the which we take our journey.

For example: the children of Israel had little lust to sing and to play upon any pleasant instruments, when they sat as prisoners by the rivers in Babylon. (Psal. cxxxvii.)

And this may a man see and prove now-a-days by those that are in any dangerous sickness, or in any hard prison, or in any anguish and misery, who before were too fond upon eating, drinking, gallant apparel, dancing, toying, playing, and gaming, or upon such-like worldly felicity. For the cross and his heaviness wipe away and lick off all such things as clean, as the hot sun licketh and melteth away the snow.

Furthermore, they that be poor and

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in distress and heaviness, are always readier to forsake this world, and are more desirous to depart hence to God, than those that have riches, health, and felicity at pleasure. And therefore St. Austin, in his book *De Symbolo*, writeth thus: "Behold, how God hath replenished and filled the world with so many afflictions and with so much troublesome adversity. It is bitter, and yet it is loved; it is ruinous, and ready to fall, and yet it is inhabited. O thou my dear darling world, what should we do, if thou wert sweet, stable, and permanent, seeing we do thus now! O thou foul and unclean world, if thou art bitter, and yet deceivest and beguilest us, whom wouldest thou not deceive and beguile, if thou wert sweet!"

And the cross doth not only drive and set us forward to all manner of virtue, and putteth us in mind of all godliness, but it quickeneth and kindleth also a diligence and fervency in us to proceed and go forward in all



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goodness lustily, stoutly, earnestly, manfully, and not litherly or faintly.

Likeas a man sometime must spur his horse, although he be a good and quick horse, that he may go and run the faster and speedier: even so we cannot go forward in our vocation and calling so speedily nor so well as we ought to do, except we be pricked forward with sharp spurs and scourges. When the master striketh his slothful, dull, and sleepy servant, then he laboureth the more diligently, and is more profitable unto him: even so we all for the most part of us have the nature of such slothful and sluggish servants, which will do nothing well, except we be driven by compulsion, and even whipped and beaten unto it.

Although those be evil servants which will do nothing unless a man be ever upon their bones with a cudgel, yea and then will do nothing well either; yet notwithstanding must a man never cease driving and forcing of them, until such time as they begin

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to amend and to serve willingly and with a good heart: even so although no compelled service, that is violently wrung out of a man, doth please God, yet the continual inuring and exercising in goodness, may make it at length so pleasant and delectable unto us, that we shall have delight therein.

*Trouble and adversity is also an occasion and help of much transitory quietness and commodity in this world.*

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Hitherto have we taught of the spiritual profit of adversity, whereby the soul of man is endued and garnished with wisdom and all kinds of virtue: now let us see what transitory commodities do oft accompany or follow after trouble and adversity. Such as dwell in valleys and in deep and low habitations, are not lightly hurt by any lightning: even so that state of life that is low and mean, keepeth and

maintaineth itself most sure and with least danger against all manner of storms.

Likeas precious and costly spices and odours do smell and savour best when they are bruised, broken, or set on fire: even so the praise and commendation of virtue through continual use and exercise, and through adversity, is spread wide abroad, and made manifest and known every where.

For an example: what an excellent and singular honour, renown, praise, and commendation was it unto Abraham at length, that he went out of his natural country into banishment, and there suffered great trouble and much adversity! (Gen. xx.) The children of Israel were sore kept under and oppressed in Egypt; but they were led out and set free again with such glory and renown, as never was heard or read the like.

The banishment of Ulysses for the space of ten years was an occasion unto him to exercise and practise his wis-

dom and other virtues in the mean time; so that he obtained thereby an immortal name among all the heathen.

And to speak after the common practice and experience, there is no exceeding joy or triumph, but some sorrow or heaviness goeth before it. The spring-time following and coming immediately upon the rough and hard winter, is the more acceptable, pleasant, and welcome unto us.

In battle, the sorer our enemies do assault and fight against us, the greater is the joy and triumph at the victory and overthrow of them.

He that hath kept his bed a long time, and lain sick a great season, afterward, when he is recovered, health is a more precious treasure unto him, than ever it was before that he felt what sickness was; and also such as mourned and were sorry for his sickness, do receive an infinite joy and an exceeding rejoicing at his restoring unto health again.

Even so doth God deprive us for a

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time of riches, wealth, prosperity, our natural country, bodily health, and such other transitory benefits, for this purpose, that when he giveth them again unto us, we may the more rejoice and be the gladder of them.

An example have we of the lost sheep and of the lost and desperate son; for the which there was such joy at the finding of them again, as never had been if they had not been lost; whereas before there was never thought nor sorrow taken for them. (Matt. xviii. Luke, xv.) Now in case we never find nor have restored unto us again here in this world that thing which we have lost, yet our conscience is both quiet and also joyful in God. Which quietness and joy far exceedeth all the pleasures of the whole world.

In summa, to be short, after trouble and adversity, followeth all manner of goodness and felicity: first, forasmuch as God here in this world doth plentifully and richly reward and recompense godliness, patience, and godly

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constancy: secondly, forasmuch as this is the nature and property of God, to throw down, that he may raise up again, and to bring unto death's door, that he may restore unto life again. (Deut. xxxii. 1 Sam. ii. Psalm cxii. Wisd. xvi.)

Roses, which are the most pleasant flowers, do spring and wax out of thorns: even so of hard and great travail springeth the most pleasant fruit.

The little bee gathereth the sweetest honey out of the most bitterblooms and flowers: even so men of wisdom and understanding receive much utility and fruit of the present sorrow and affliction.

For example: Joseph was hated of his brethren, and sold of them into a strange and foreign country, which banishment of his turned to his great honour, wealth, and profit; forasmuch as he was lord and governor over the whole kingdom of Egypt. The more the great tyrant Pharaoh went about

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to oppress and rid the children of Israel out of his land, the more did they prosper and increase to an infinite number. (Exod. ii.)

The devil left nothing unto the godly man Job, but deprived and spoiled him of all that he had; but the Lord restored him all again double, even in this world. (Job, i. xlii.) He that marketh and considereth well, shall perceive that some time a man, being of no reputation at home where he is known, is banished away, and cometh to other people, which do highly esteem him, and make much of him, yea, and highly honour him; so that oft-times a man's adversity hath turned to his singular commodity and wealth. (Matt. xiii. Mark, vi. Luke, iv. John, iv.)

*Trouble and adversity is a furtherance to eternal life.*

#### THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

The trouble and adversity of the godly do give an exceeding great tes-

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timony unto thee of immortality, of a general judgment, and also of an everlasting life. For it is impossible that the best creatures only should be ordained and created to all sorrow and travail, and the most wicked and ungodly to escape and remain unpunished. It were directly against the righteousness of God.

Now it is evident, that here upon earth appeareth no difference between Paul and Nero, having respect to the reward of them both; yea, the most godly and virtuous have most commonly worse luck and less reward. Wherefore of necessity there must needs be another life to come, where every man shall receive according to the demerits of his life here upon earth.

And again, the cross way is pointed to be the very right way unto eternal life. (Psalm xlv. Rom. viii. 2 Cor. iv.) Likeas the corn is first threshed, fanned, and rid from the chaff, and then laid up and reserved in the barn:

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even so Christian men upon earth are beaten, mishandled, evil treated, whereby they are purged of many wild and light manners, and so are brought into the everlasting barn of the kingdom of heaven.

Like as no man can triumph or be crowned except he hath fought and warred manfully (1 Cor. ix. 2 Tim. ii.); which cannot be without great danger, labour, and travail: even so can no man attain to the crown of eternal life, except he hath first suffered much trouble, sorrow, and adversity. (2 Tim. iv. 1 Pet. v. James, i. Rev. ii. iii.)

The man that is sick must receive the purgation and medicine, how sour or bitter soever it be, that he may the sooner recover his health again, and not die: even so when we suffer the hand of God to rule and order us, being content and patient therewith, although it smarteth and grieveth us, yet it shall profit and help us to everlasting health and soundness,

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Testimonies and witness of Scripture to prove this: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." (Matt. v.) "Narrow is the gate and strait is the way that leadeth to life." (Matt. vii.) "Blessed are they that weep here, for they shall laugh; but woe unto you that be rich, &c." (Luke, iv.) "We must enter into the kingdom of God through much trouble and affliction." (Acts, xiv.) "If we be children, then are we heirs, namely, the heirs of God and fellow-heirs of Christ; so that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together with him." (Rom. viii.)

By these words doth Paul evidently declare, that he that will reign with Christ, must also run through the fire with him. When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. (1 Cor. xi.)

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*How and in what respect trouble and adversity can be so profitable, and of such virtue, seeing that the unfaithful do wax more obstinate and perverse through trouble and afflictions.*

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Hitherto have we entreated of the corporal and spiritual, temporal and eternal, profit and commodity which Christian men receive by the cross, trouble, and adversity. Which is not to be taken after this sense, as though the cross or adversity of itself, and of her own nature, could bring and work such high commodities; for then should Pharaoh and other wicked persons, in their trouble and adversity, have been converted and saved also. But the spirit of God resteth secretly, and lieth hid in the faithful, under the shadow and bark of the cross, and purgeth, reformeth, comforteth, and

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strengtheneth them, and worketh all these foresaid commodities in them.

Now likas the holy Scripture attributeth a certain reward unto our good works, which works, notwithstanding it is not we that work them, but the Lord, which useth us as instruments of his: even so is the cross an instrument of God, whereby he subdueth our flesh, keepeth us in the school of correction, and forceth us, as it were, by violence, from evil to goodness. (Philip. ii. 2 Cor. i.)

Now, wheresoever the Holy Ghost will take his resting-place, for the most part he sendeth before his purveyors and forerunners, which are sorrow and affliction, trouble and adversity; that they may vex, cumber, humble, meeken, and utterly overthrow and bring down the heart of man, whereby the Holy Ghost may find the more place, and so work all goodness therein.

And therefore whatsoever is hitherto spoken; specially of the spiritual com-

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modities of the cross and adversity, it is and so remaineth all truth : so that it be understood of the faithful and godly, which are endued with the spirit of God, to whom all things turn to their comfort and salvation.

And now on the contrary part, for the better understanding of the matter, I will declare and shew what the cross worketh in the unfaithful and ungodly, which lack the spirit of God. The unfaithful do ascribe their prosperity and felicity to their own wisdom, working, and policy, and not to God ; and their misfortune and adversity they ascribe to blind fortune, as though fortune had a certain power to work of herself, without the working of God.

Take Sennacherib, the lord and ruler of the Assyrians, for an example ; which by the sufferance of God brought the whole world in a manner in subjection : which thing he ascribed to his own power and policy, and not to God ; for he did both hate and blaspheme the very true God of Israel. But

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shortly after did God send an angel, which slew in one night an hundred fourscore and five thousand of his men. And here would he not confess that it was God that did it ; but peradventure he thought that it was fortune, mischance, or some other thing that was the occasion. (2 Kings, xix.)

For if he had acknowledged this punishment to have come and been of God, he would not afterward have worshipped and done his devotion in the idolaters' temple of the false god and idol Nisroch, as he did. In like manner, when any misfortune happeneth to the ungodly, they put all the fault only in the next middle or mean, that they fancied themselves ; or else, very wickedly, they ascribe it unto all those that are not of their faith and sect.

As for example : Whenas it rained not for the space of three years and six months, in the time of Ahab, the king of Israel, the king imputed the cause unto the godly prophet Elias.

(1 Kings, xviii.) Likewise in our time, when any tempest hurteth the corn, wine, and other fruits of the earth, many there are that cry, This may we thank this new learning for, and this new-fangled faith, &c.; as though they themselves were so holy, that God durst not, or ought not, to punish them. It can be none but the poor sheep that disturbeth the water, that the wolf cannot drink; whereas, indeed, the poor sheep cometh but only to the brink, and at the very brink of the river drinketh.

Yea, even they also which have some taste of the Gospel, cannot well have adversity patiently, nor confess themselves guilty; but would fain shift the fault from themselves, and would lay it either upon the rulers or the preachers, or else upon some other thing.

And although their sins be an exceeding heap, and that God would fain drive them to repentance by punishing and chastising of them, yet

cannot they consider the heavy burden of their sin, nor spy the clear day of the righteousness of God, which can suffer no sin unpunished.

And, therefore, forasmuch as they will not take this small and light punishment thankfully, but would go free, and have no manner of plague at all if they might choose, for that cause doth God send unto them afterward plagues and painful punishments by heaps; so that it happeneth unto them as it did unto the ass, whose skin being put over a drum or a tabor, as he wished and desired, was beaten and stricken more than ever it was before, as Æsop saith in his fables.

And forasmuch as, through incredulity and lack of faith (which is the mother of all blasphemies and abomination), they will not consider nor call to remembrance who it is that hath laid his hand upon them; or else, knowing that it is the hand of God, yet will not take it in good worth, nor amend no otherwise but as sour ale in



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summer: by this means they become like unto desperate children, which will neither turn and amend with threatening, nor yet with beating.

And therefore the Scripture testifieth very well, that one sharp word of reproach doth more good to him that hath understanding, than a hundred stripes to a fool. (Prov. xvii.)

As, for example, the longer and the sharper that God punished Pharaoh, the more obstinately did he swerve and decline from him. The wicked and ungodly do not only take no manner of occasion to reform and amend their lives by their cross and sorrow, but also they pour out all manner of impatientness, bitterness, and spiteful poison, against the righteousness of God, saying, their cross is greater than their transgression, and that they have wrong, and are punished too sore.

As for an example of this, we have one of the thieves hanging upon the cross with Christ, which blasphemed

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Christ very spitefully, saying, If thou be Christ, help both thyself and us. (Luke, xxiii.) By the which words he declared, that he judgeth himself even as worthy of help as Christ, the Son of God; even as though God must forget all his righteousness, and help by and by every blasphemous wretch, and look through the fingers upon the wicked world, which is one of the greatest blasphemies unto God that can be.

When they have tumbled and wallowed in their misery (for God will not help them, because they have no trust nor confidence in him), and have sought help by creatures both in heaven and earth, and found none; then beginneth their cross and adversity to open their eyes so wide, that they must needs spy and acknowledge the wrath and hand of God over them. And then doth this outward cross and sorrow even kindle in them an inward trembling and doubtfulness, out of the which springeth the highest despera-

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tion; insomuch that they cry out to the devil to help them, if God will not. (1 Sam. xxviii. 2 Sam. xvii.)

For although they be brought to the knowledge of their sin, and also to sorrow and repentance for the same, through the cross, as Cain and Judas also were, yet have they no trust nor confidence that the same sin shall be taken from them and forgiven them, but rave and rage, and give themselves over to the devil, and so depart wretchedly out of this world. (Gen. iv. Matt. xxvii.)

Of whose destruction yet, and confusion, these commodities do ensue: first, that they must of force cease any longer to make any disturbance by the wicked example of their life in the church and regiment of God: secondarily, that they which remain alive after them may learn, by their terrible example, to repent and amend by times.

So that by this, that we have hitherto declared, every Christian man may

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know his trouble and adversity, whether he be a martyr of God or of the devil, and what greater profit and singular commodity all those that are God's martyrs do receive by the means of their cross, trouble, and martyrdom.

*Fellow-companions in trouble and adversity.*

THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER.

Why should any man shew and behave himself impatiently in suffering the thing which he can by no policy, counsel, nor lawful means avoid, alter, turn, remedy, or amend? He that is wise maketh of such necessity, as can by no remedy be avoided, a very virtue.

Now trouble and adversity doth so happen unto man, that he cannot help nor avoid it, though he would never so fain. Man must needs suffer trouble and adversity upon earth, there is no remedy.

And again, why should any man without measure cumber himself about

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that thing which is common unto all men, or to the most part, and not to him alone? By natural reason that burden is lighter which many do bear together.

Now is the life of man a very miserable and lamentable thing. When another man prospereth so that all things go well with him, yet it fareth with him even as with a bloom or a flower in the field, which flourisheth for a while, and is pleasant and delectable to look upon, within a little while after it drieth up and fadeth away.

As long as we are upon earth, we are, as it were, in a camp or a siege, where we must be skirmishing and fighting, and know neither who shall break out and give the onset against us, nor where, nor how, nor when. Sometime a man is attacked and assaulted in his body, in his goods, in his name and fame. Sometime happen unto him common mischances; as dearth, pestilence, war, which some-

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time continue very long, so that he may well say, no misfortune cometh alone, but bringeth one or other companion with it.

If not at that present, yet hereafter it may; and there is no misfortune so great, but may happen and light upon any of us all. At least ways we must all look for death, as it was said long ago unto our first parents. (Gen. iii.)

To rehearse examples it were but folly and superfluous, forasmuch as there is no man but may lawfully complain of one thing or other; and although some things happen after our minds, yet it is not without some sour sauce.

And specially at this present, how are all Christ's realms compassed with sorrows, troubles, and miseries on every side! Look but upon our own country: there is neither good nor bad, godly nor ungodly, but hath one cross or other.

And although some there be that can shift for a while, and can make

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provision for themselves for a time by craft, subtilty, and dissimulation, or by some falsehood in fellowship, as they call it, yet they bring themselves at length into the highest danger, confusion, and shame, both in this world and in the world to come.

And seeing that all the troubles and adversities in this world are a thousand times lighter and easier, yea, nothing in the respect of the eternal unquenchable fire, which is prepared and already kindled for the unfaithful and wicked enemies of God, all faithful and godly persons ought to bear and suffer their transitory afflictions and adversities the more patiently, willingly, and thankfully, considering and remembering all the dear beloved friends of God, which were wonderfully vexed and plagued of their enemies. (Rom. viii. 2 Cor. iv. v. 1 Cor. iii. Matt. xxv. Isai. xxx. Dan. vii.)

Abraham of the Chaldees, Lot of the Sodomites, Isaac of Ishmael, Jacob of Esau, Moses of his people, David of

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Saul, and of his own son. As for Job, he had not one drop of blood in his body unconsumed. (Gen. xii. xix. xxxii. xxxiii. Num. xx. 1 Sam. xv. Job, ii.)

John Baptist, the holiest that ever was naturally born of a woman, was without any manner of form or order of law, right, or reason, beheaded in the prison, as though God had known nothing at all of him. (Matt. xiv. Mark, vi.)

We have many thousand fellow-martyrs and companions of our misery and adversity, in respect of whose imprisonment, racking, chains, fire, wild beasts, and other means, wherewith they are tormented, all that we suffer is but a wind or a pastime.

But specially this is to be considered above all other in our trouble and adversity, that we have Jesus Christ for a fellow and companion with us therein, which suffered upon earth in his body all manner of smart and pain. (Isai. liii. Matt. xxvii. Mark, xv.)

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Now is not the servant above the master. What reason were it that the natural Son of God, being utterly innocent, should be so cruelly intreated and mishandled; and we which are his children, not by nature, but by adoption and election, and in all points guilty, should escape quiet and free? (Matt. x. John, i. Rom. viii. 1 Cor. i. v.)

Therefore, now, whosoever is ashamed of the cross, and aggrieved therewith, the same is ashamed and aggrieved to have Christ for his fellow and companion, and therefore shall the Lord Jesus Christ be ashamed of him again at the latter day. (Gal. iv. Eph. i.)

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THE SECOND PART OF THIS  
BOOK.

*By what natural means or ways trouble  
and adversity may be qualified,  
eased, and overcome.*

THE TWENTY-SECOND CHAPTER.

First and foremost, no man ought to meddle with other men's matters, which appertain nothing unto him, nor to cast himself into peril and danger without any need. For that were as much as to tempt God, and were clean contrary to the examples both of our Saviour Christ, and also of the holy Apostles; which by the commandment of Christ did sometime flee and avoid perils and dangers. (Matt. x.) But a man cannot always honestly and conveniently avoid them.

Therefore, for the second point, like as a waterman will never let out his sail so far but that he may soon pull it in again; even so every man, as

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long as all things stand well and upright with him, let him foresee and prepare in time for the contrary.

For the which cause the Lord did tell his disciples of his cross, death, and passion before, that they, seeing him suffer anguish and sorrow, might the less quail and shrink at it. In like manner did he also declare before unto them, that they must be persecuted and suffer trouble, that they might look for it, and be the more hardy, bold, and strong, in persecution, whensoever it should happen. (Matt. xvi. xvii. xx. Mark, viii. ix. x. Luke, ix. xviii.)

Thirdly: a great weight and substance of the matter dependeth and hangeth upon this point, that a man conceive a right judgment and opinion of all things that happen and chance. For every thing appeareth so unto us, even as we in our thoughts and minds do fancy, imagine, and conceive it.

If a man esteem worldly goods for a light thing (as they ought in very

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deed to be esteemed), then can he forbear the same with the less grief and pain. Contrariwise, if he make a god of them, and esteem them highly, then he trembleth, quaketh, and taketh on unmeasurably, when he is spoiled and deprived of them.

In like manner in other things, a man oft-times fancieth and imagineth in himself that he can abide and suffer no manner of misfortune; when, if it were well considered, that present evil which is so feared should soon seem but a trifle and no misfortune, but rather a blessing or a good turn. And though it be not light and small indeed, yet let it be esteemed and taken for light, forasmuch as it cometh alone, and bringeth not two, three, or an hundred companions with it.

For it is a wonder and a singular miracle of God, that among such infinite and innumerable perils as the world and Satan have ready prepared, and even bent over us, we are not utterly headlong overwhelmed, and

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suddenly destroyed of them all. (1 Pet. v.) And yet God sendeth and mixeth always some goodness and comfort between.

As thou hast peradventure a sickly and diseased body, but yet thy mind and heart is sound and strong. Or thou art vexed and cumbered in thy mind, yet hast thou an whole or a sound body. Or peradventure thou art robbed, spoiled, and deprived of thy temporal and worldly goods, and other transitory pleasures; yet hast many and divers Christian virtues and singular gifts of grace; where is a thousand times more felicity than in all health, beauty, strength, riches, friendship, wife, children, honour, dignity, or power; for this is not written in vain: O Lord, the earth is full of thy goodness. (Psal. civ.)

Here should an heart and mind that is vexed and cumbered cease and leave off from the consideration of the present misery and affliction, and call to remembrance what other benefits of

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God do yet remain, or what other we have had, or at least what are yet to come and to happen to all faithful Christians. And therefor there is an old common proverb, good to be remembered: In adversity remember prosperity; and again, in prosperity think upon adversity.

Again: oft-times many a loss and mischance weareth lightly away again, and is soon remedied another way. As, if some special friend of thine be taken from thee by death, thou mayest happen upon another as good as him, or else some other benefits may happen unto thee for that loss within a while.

And be it in case that thy misery and misfortune continue a long while, yet is all manner of trouble that we suffer upon earth transitory, ever passing away, and not durable nor perpetual.

The length and process of time doth mitigate, ease, assuage, and lighten all manner of smart, pain, and grief; if

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the mind be a while used unto it, and somewhat exercised and waxen hard in it. Yet such as be wise ought not to tarry till smart and grief wear and fret away of itself, but to prevent the time by such means as we have hitherto taught, and hereafter shall follow.

Fourthly: ordinary means are not to be condemned, despised, or refused. Likeas a ship-master, being upon the water, and foreseeing a tempest to be at hand, calleth upon God's aid and help; and yet for all that he hath also a sure eye to the stern, to rule that as handsomely and cunningly as he can. (Acts, xxvii.)

Even so in all manner of necessities and perils it is lawful, and men ought also to use all manner of honest and convenient means; as physic and medicines in sickness; labour and travail with the sweat of our brows in poverty; the power and authority of the magistrate in wrong, injury, debate, and dissension; battle array against the enemies of our country, and such-

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like; so that no man build nor trust in any manner of thing saving in the very living God only, which can help, deliver, and remedy all things, without any middle or mean, if there were none at hand. (Gen. iii. Matt. ix. 1 Sam. x.)

Fifthly: when a man waiteth, tendeth upon, and serveth his honest craft, science, vocation, or office, whereunto God hath called him, and studieth to execute, perform, and follow it diligently, as he ought to do, it driveth away many evil and vain fancies from a troubled mind, that is cumbered with any grief or affliction.

Sixthly: likeas weak, tender, and diseased eyes are refreshed and quickened with green and fresh pleasant colours, even so cumbered and troubled minds are wonderfully refreshed, revived, and restored to strength, through seemly, honest, and measurable mirth and pastime; as through hearing of instruments of music, by walking abroad, by altering and changing of



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the air, and by going out of such places as be obscure and dark, into such as be very lightsome.

And specially for a man in his trouble to visit his special friends, or to be visited of them, bringeth a double comfort and easement unto his sorrowful and unquiet mind.

First, in declaring thy grief and disease unto thy friend, and opening thy whole heart, and pouring out thy whole mind before him, thou findest a singular easement in thy mind thereby. And again; a true and a faithful friend, through his pity and bemoaning of thee, helpeth thee, as it were, to bear the burden; and although he can take away no part of the substance of thy sorrow, yet his good heart and will, and friendly words, are a great comfort unto thee.

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*The best and surest succour and comfort in adversity resteth only in the might, power, will, and goodness of God.*

THE TWENTY-THIRD CHAPTER.

Now will I open and declare, that God both can, may, and will help and succour sufficiently for Christ's sake, in respect of whom he promised us all manner of help, aid, and comfort, and performeth it. And I will also shew by what means, and in what measure, he worketh the same.

God seeth and looketh upon us, how we stick and wrestle in peril and danger, and he knoweth best of all how and when to remedy, help, and deliver us, that his glory and our wealth may be most furthered. And he is not one that only knoweth all things, but he is also almighty, and can work and bring to pass all things. And if our affliction and adversity wax and increase from day to day, the longer the

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worse; yet is God always a thousand times mightier and stronger than it.

But so mighty cannot God be, but he is as gracious and merciful also, and hath a greater lust and desire to shew and declare his true heart and love towards us, than we can wish or desire. And although he seemeth in our sight to take utterly away all manner of light of his grace out of our eyes, yet he remaineth gracious and favourable towards us privily, and, as it were, in secret; and certainly he will not forsake us, give us over, nor suffer us to stick and continue in such heaviness and danger.

And it is not our good works, merits, and deserts, that move him thereunto, but the infinite and endless merit and desert of Jesus Christ, which hath purchased unto us, through his death and passion, remission of our sins, the heavenly gifts of the Holy Ghost, and mitigation or easement of our troubles and adversities.

And it is not possible that any man

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that taketh hold of Christ and hath him, can be oppressed or overthrown either of sin, the devil, the world, or of all the creatures in heaven and earth; but shall continue and remain for ever under the wing and defence of God. (Rom. viii. Psal. xxxiv. Prov. xxiv.)

Furthermore, Almighty God, being pacified and reconciled with mankind through Jesus Christ, hath promised both unto the children of Israel, and to all that be in any distress and vexation, through his ministers, evermore, from time to time, help, succour, and comfort.

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite and broken heart, and will help them that have sorrowful and humble minds. (Psal. cxlvii.)

He desireth me, and hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him. I am by him and with him in his trouble; I will bring him out, and set him in honour, &c. (Psal. xci.) O, how comfortable a thing, and what an high honour is it, to have such a mighty

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and so faithful a fellow-companion, which will so lovingly stand by us and aid us!

Now as for the time, God will help in due and convenient season, and we must suffer him to take his time and leisure. For likeas God seeth the trouble and affliction of his church, how it is vexed, even so hath he appointed a just time, how long he will suffer the wicked to take their pleasure, and how far they shall go and attempt. And when that is expired, no longer nor further can they go. As the captivity of Babylon was appointed to continue seventy years, and then to cease.

Yea, when the sorrow and heaviness is at the highest, and every one of us thinketh that God hath utterly forsaken us, then is God most ready to help us, and his aid is most nigh unto us. Yea, and to speak certainly as the truth is, God comforteth us continually in the midst of all our troubles and

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heaviness, and is never from us. (Psa. xli. Matthew, xxviii. John, xiv.)

For the faithful man hath in his heart the spirit of God, the fountain and spring of the heavenly water, of the which he is evermore moistened, revived, and refreshed, to his singular comfort. (John, iv.)

And the more that our sorrow and adversity augmenteth and increaseth, the greater aid and assistance shall we find and perceive. God will not suffer you to be tempted above your strength, but together with your temptation he will make a way out, that ye shall be able to bear it. (1 Cor. x. 2 Pet. ii.)

By these words doth Paul teach very comfortably, that God will not tempt, test, nor assay us harder nor sorer than we may away with, and be able to bear.

As the afflictions of Christ are plentiful and abundant in us, even so is the consolation through Christ also plentiful and abundant. (2 Cor. i.)

For example: the holy Apostles

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were so strengthened, that they rejoiced that they might suffer any thing for Christ's sake. (Acts, iv. v.) And at this present day God sendeth more comfort than all devils and all the world are able to send heaviness, sorrow, and discomfort.

Likeas a captain in war giveth his soldiers that are under him a great courage by speaking manfully and comfortably unto them ; even so God will have his comfortable word daily to be published and proclaimed abroad, to the intent to encourage his soldiers that fight under his banner. And yet he is not so satisfied, that we should be encouraged with bare and simple words, but he himself is present by us with his Spirit ; which Spirit, as a sure warrant and an earnest penny, certifieth and assureth our hearts of the grace, favour, and aid of God. (Matt. xxviii. Rom. viii.)

And thus he comforteth and maketh our hearts rejoice unfeignedly, and giveth us wisdom, boldness, and

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strength, to skirmish and fight against all manner of enemies, as well ghostly as bodily.

Although in winter the trees seem and appear not only unfruitful, but also utterly dead, yet the sun with his coming, when the winter hath taken her leave, doth so mollify, resolve, and warm both the earth itself and the trees, that they bud out again, wax green, and bring forth fruit : even so, when the faithful are esteemed and seem as though they were deprived and destitute of all help, and utterly forsaken, yet doth the heavenly Spirit of God lighten, warm, and strengthen their hearts to all goodness.

Likeas the young infant is not able to go of himself for very tenderness and lack of strength, but must be sustained, holden up, and led with the hand of the nurse ; and likeas a sick woman, weakened with much and long sickness, is not able to go one step, but some whole and strong woman must take her under the arm, guide,

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and lead her, that she may go with them : even so are we not able to go of ourselves.

There is some kind of sorrow and martyrdom that we tremble and quake for fear when we do but hear of it, much less were we able to suffer and to bear it : but God with his mighty hand and present power strengtheneth, sustaineth, and preserveth us. The Spirit succoureth and helpeth our weakness and infirmities. (Rom. viii.)

And if the devil through his spirit doth drive and move the people, that they are ready and willing to all wickedness and abomination, though it cost them their lives ; why should not God through his Spirit make us as lusty and willing to all goodness, whatsoever sorrow or affliction we suffer ?

Sometime God mitigateth and easeth the punishments, that we may the more easily overcome them. The captain giveth sometime his soldiers liberty to take their rest, ease, and

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pastime, that they may somewhat refresh themselves, and afterward fight the more manly and freshly : even so our spiritual Captain granteth oftentimes unto his Christians, a certain recreation, ease, and rest, whereby they may refresh and revive themselves, that they may afterward handle themselves the more valiantly in their spiritual affairs.

And sometime he dischargeth us utterly of all manner of trouble and unquietness, and restoreth all our losses and hindrances again, and delivereth us, to our singular pre-eminence, praise, and commendation, and keepeth and saveth us from all manner of misery and unquietness in time to come. And to perform this thing God useth not only his Spirit, but also other means ; as the angels, the stars, the elements, beasts, men, and all manner of creatures.

Like as a man of war hath a lust and a courage to fight, having divers valiant servants about him, which will

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suffer him to take no wrong; even so the holy angels do compass us about and defend us, that in all manner of affliction and adversity we are bold, and able to stand and continue valiantly. (Psal. xxxiv. 2 Kings, xix. Joshua, v.)

Elias said to his boy, Be not afraid; for they that are with us are more than they that are with them, &c. (2 Kings, vi.) The Red Sea and the flood of Jordan withdrew themselves, that the children of Israel might go over dry, and never wet their feet. (Exod. xiv. Josh. iii.)

The sun and moon stood still for Joshua's pleasure, and never moved until such time as he had slain the five kings. (Josh. x.)

Elias was wonderfully fed of the ravens. (1 Kings, xvii.)

Through the hand of a woman the Israelites were delivered from a terrible and cruel host of their enemies. And commonly God comforteth and

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delivereth men through other men. (Esther, vi. vii. viii. Judith, viii.)

And specially this is a comfortable thing, that all faithful and holy Christians upon earth have fellowship and participation together in all manner of things, both good and bad, as well one as another; and therefore whensoever I suffer any smart, pain, or sorrow, both Christ and all true Christians suffer with me. For the Lord saith not, They were hungry and thirsty, &c. but he saith, I was hungry, and I was thirsty. (Isa. lviii. Matt. xxv.)

And furthermore, the whole congregation of Christ doth help me to bear my burden. For they that are the members of one body, take care and sorrow one for another: if the sole of the foot be hurt, doth it not grieve the whole body? (Gal. vi.) Now St. Paul calleth all Christian men one body, and also one bread and one cup. (1 Cor. vi.) And therefore all other faithful Christians have compassion,

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and are heavy and sorrowful for me; and whatsoever is light unto them, is also light unto me.

Take a manifest example by the godly Prophet Jeremy; which complained sore, and was in much distress, when he had no other cause, but that the Jews, his countrymen, were so evil handled and vexed.

*Examples of the help and aid of God.*

THE TWENTY-FOURTH CHAPTER.

To this end and purpose ought we to consider and to call unto mind the examples both of the Old and New Testament. If God had ever forsaken his faithful elect in their trouble and need, then might we have a just and lawful excuse to mistrust him; but forasmuch as none that ever sought upon God was forsaken of him (Psalm xxxvii.), ought not that to comfort and strengthen us, that he will also mercifully stand by us in all our need and necessity?

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The godly man Noah, his sons and sons' wives, were preserved of God through an ark or a ship, whenas the whole world beside was destroyed with the sin-flood. Now if we with Noah believe in the blessed Seed, so shall we also with him be reputed for virtuous and good before God, and be preserved as he was. (Gen. iii.)

Lot was also delivered from the plague and punishment of the Sodomites. (Gen. xix.)

Jacob was fain to flee from his brother Esau, and to suffer great wrong and injury of his father-in-law, Laban; and yet he was nevertheless blessed and preserved of God. (Gen. xxxii.)

Joseph being sold of his brethren, and because he would not commit filthiness and abomination with his master's wife, was cast into prison; but God delivered him, and exalted him to high honour. (Gen. xxxviii. xxxix. xli.)

King Pharaoh threatened Moses very sore, and the children of Israel also themselves would have stoned

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him to death: but God preserved him under his protection. (Exod. xiv. xvii.)

Unto the children of Israel God gave water out of a hard rock of stone, and bread from heaven, and quails and other necessary things, for the comfort of their necessity, wonderfully in the wilderness. (Numb. xx. Exod. xvi. xvii.) How graciously did God preserve king David and Hezekiah in their trouble and necessity, and also the Prophets Ezekiel and Daniel among the heathen; and likewise defended he Judas Macchabæus, with other at that time. (1 Sam. xix. xxiv. xxvi. xxviii. 2 Chron. xxxii. Dan. vi. 1 Mac. ii.)

Forty men had made a solemn vow, neither to eat nor drink till they had killed Paul; but God did not suffer it to come to pass. (Acts, xxiii. Rom. xv.) These and other like examples are written for this purpose, that we should give like judgment, and have like opi-

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nion of other like examples, which are not expressed.

Beside this, it is also evident, and hath been marked, that some time such as have been the most timorous, weak, and fearful, afterward, being strengthened in faith through the might and power of God, have suffered martyrdom, banishment, and death, most willingly and joyfully; and also have comforted boldly such as have suffered with them, even against the nature and disposition of the flesh of man. (Acts, iv. v. Rom. viii. 2 Cor. iv. Psalm xlv.)

Yea, there is not one of us all but have oft felt and proved the help, protection, and aid of God. For who can make his boast that he himself did help any thing at all to the matter, when he was formed in his mother's womb? of the which matter read David: Who hath kept us hitherto while we have been asleep. (Psalm cxix. cxxvii.)

Who hath sorrowed and taken care



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for us, when we have laboured or taken our pastime, or else done some other thing, and never took thought the least moment for ourselves? It may well happen that God may sometime suffer us to swim, but he will never suffer us to sink or drown.

To be short: if there were not so many examples before our eyes, if we would but look a little backward, and consider how we have passed and avoided the time that is past, which surely hath been always full of great perils and dangers; whether we will or will not, we shall be compelled to confess and grant, that the merciful goodness of God hath borne us in his bosom, and hath preserved us from divers dangers and perils, over and above all that ever we could think, imagine, or devise.

Now if God hath thus holpen and delivered us many and divers ways, without any labour or study of ourselves, yea, without any manner of care or sorrow of our parts, whenas

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we neither knew nor thought that he was present with us, we must needs be very obstinate, dull, and mad, if we do not from henceforth, in any manner of trouble or necessity, cast our sorrow upon him, and suffer him to care for us; but we in such case, oh shame! begin to doubt and fear lest he hath already forsaken us, or will from henceforth give us over. (Psalm xxxv. Matt. vi. Luke, xii. 1 Pet. v.)

Item, if God of his natural love, beneficialness, and free liberality giveth here in this transitory life health, strength, riches, wealth, friendship, power, authority, honour, and such-like, even unto the wicked and ungodly; why should not we determine and conclude upon the same, that he will deal and distribute a thousand times higher and greater benefits unto the godly and right faithful Christians, although they neither see nor receive those gifts at that present instant?

Besides this the Lord also com-

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forteth us: if God take care for the fowls of the air and the flowers of the field, and provideth nourishment and clothing for them; truly he will deal as faithfully with us men, which excel many ways the fowls of the air and grass of the field. (Luke, xii. Matt. vi. x.)

THE THIRD AND LAST PART OF  
THIS BOOK.

*We must direct our faith, hope, and confidence towards God.*

THE TWENTY-FIFTH CHAPTER.

Hitherto hath it been declared, that the very right and true help, succour, and comfort resteth in God through Christ, and for his sake; now shall it consequently be taught how we should order and behave ourselves again with faith, hope, prayer, repentance, amendment of life, and patience, that God may participate, distribute, and extend his grace and mighty merciful hand towards us.

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First of all, although we must utterly despair of all manner of help and succour of man, and can in no wise devise or imagine what or after what sort God will or may help and aid us; yet notwithstanding, we must utterly resist and banish all manner of heavy, sorrowful, and desperate fancies and imaginations of the mind, and give no place unto them, but conceive steadfastly this sure trust and confidence in God, that he both knoweth and will take and hit the right time, measure, and means to help us, and will valiantly and gloriously deliver us.

Let us commit altogether joyfully and boldly without fear unto God, and let his mercy and gracious goodness more rejoice and comfort us, than all the misery and sorrow under heaven, upon earth, or in hell may fear us.

Yea, we need to care and sorrow for nothing so much as for this, that we be not too careful and sorrowful for ourselves, as though God had given over all his care and sorrow for us:

for likeas the governor, father, or good man of the house taketh all the care and sorrow upon himself, how he shall find, feed, and sustain his family; and as the household servants ought to love their masters, to have a good trust and opinion of them, and also to labour and to do such service as they are appointed unto, faithfully; even so all manner of care and sorrow for us belongeth unto God, and our parts and duty is no more but to trust and believe in him, and to serve in the vocation and condition of life, whereunto we are all called and appointed of God, faithfully.

Now if God be most victorious and invincible, and his dear beloved Son also an everlasting strength, that can never fail against the devil and the world; and again, both Christ and God himself, through faith, are ours, and dwell in us (Eph. iii.); then there is no cause why the fearful Christian man should fear neither his own feeble flesh and body, nor his

weak and impotent age, nor yet the whole power of the devil, though he be armed and weaponed with a thousand thousand crafts and subtleties. (1 Pet. v.)

For if so be that in God be all manner of joy, blessedness, and felicity, and we through faith do prove and find him a gracious and merciful God unto us, then may we lawfully rejoice in God, even in the midst of the highest sorrow and adversity that can be: witness Psalm xxv. lv, There shall none be confounded and put to shame, that hopeth in thee. Cast thy care and sorrow upon the Lord, and he shall defend and sustain thee. What can be thought or imagined more sweet or comfortable?

For example: the heathenish woman of Canaan, all hope and comfort in the remedy and counsel of man set apart, desireth help and succour of Christ; and although the Lord giveth her at first a rough and sharp answer,

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yet she is nothing abashed, nor will be so answered. (Matt. xv.)

Even so hold thou on likewise with the heathenish woman, saying and crying still, "O thou Son of David, have mercy upon me." And so shalt thou hear at length this comfortable Gospel and absolution: "Thy faith is great, be it unto thee as thou desirest."

St. Bernard sheweth very comfortably what a faith he had in these godly words: "O Lord, it is much better for me to suffer trouble, so that thou only mayest be by me, than to rule and live pleasantly and costly without thee; it is better and more pleasant unto me to be in a hot, burning, and flaming oven with thee, than even to be in heaven without thee."

And who did ever trust in the Lord, whom he at length forsook? Besides all this, Almighty God commandeth that we should hope, trust, and look for help at his hands; which hope bringeth with her a mitigation and easement of the smart and sorrow,

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I hope in the Lord, therefore shall I not fall. Hope thou only in God, so shalt thou be holpen. Hope is never confounded nor put to shame. (Psa. xxvi. xxviii. Rom. v.)

*Of prayer in trouble and adversity.*

THE TWENTY-SIXTH CHAPTER.

The holy Scripture teacheth us in all manner of necessities, as well bodily as ghostly, to call upon God, and to flee unto him. And here doth it profit very much, if one be mindful of another in his prayer.

But what should a man pray for? First and most specially, for remission of his sins; for when we have once obtained of God pardon of our sins, then certainly shall the sickness, adversity, or punishment either clearly cease, or else, through the gracious will and goodness of God, it shall redound to the furtherance of our salvation.

Secondarily, we must also pray either

that God will help and deliver us, not after the device and fancy of our own brains, but after such wise as shall seem meet unto his godly wisdom; or else that he will mitigate and ease our pain and punishment, that our weakness may not utterly faint and sink down to the bottom.

Likeas a sick person, although he doubt nothing of the faithfulness, honesty, and tenderness of his physician or surgeon towards him, yet for all that desireth him to handle his wound, and to dress him as easily and tenderly as is possible for him: even so in like manner may we call upon God, that if it be not against his honour and glory, he will vouchsafe to give some mitigation and easement of the pain.

And specially let us desire of him to grant us strength that we faint not, nor be overcome with the fear or greatness of our sorrow and grief, whereby we might forsake him, and fall into some wickedness; but that we may rather, after the examples of

the holy martyrs, suffer death and most intolerable torments, than either to forsake and deny our faith, or else to do any manner of thing against the will of God. (Rom. viii.) And it is very expedient for us to pray with the lost and desperate son, "I am no more worthy from henceforth to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants." (Luke, xv.) I will gladly with all my heart have sorrow and trouble upon earth even as a labouring servant, that goeth for his hire, so that thou wilt but suffer me to dwell and remain in thy house for ever.

But now how should we pray? St. James, in his first chapter, teacheth us, that we should pray in faith without wavering, and nothing doubt but that God doth mercifully hear us. We must continually look upon the promises of God, and have this always before our eyes, that we do not only seek help and remedy at his hands, but also hope and look surely for it, committing both body and soul with a

good will unto him. (Matt. xxi. Mark, xi.)

“Call upon me in thy need, and I will help and deliver thee, and so shalt thou praise me: let him call upon me, so will I hear him: I am by him in his trouble, I will deliver him out, and bring him to honour.” (Psalm l. xci.)

And again, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever you shall pray for unto the Father in my name (that is to say, in the trust and confidence upon my merits), he shall give it unto you.” (John, xiv.) For example: when Moses held up his hands unto God and prayed, his enemies, the Amalekites, were overcome. (Exod. xvii.) The two blind men which did cry after the Lord, “O Son of David, have mercy upon us,” were heard. (Matt. ix.) Of such-like examples are the Gospels full.

Item, in trouble and adversity we ought to praise God, and to give him thanks that he hath not forgotten us, but through his fatherly visitation calleth and draweth us unto him, and

graciously helpeth us to bear all manner of burdens: even so did Paul in his adversity praise God. (2 Cor. i.)

“Praised be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercy, and God of all consolation, which comforteth us in all our troubles and afflictions.”

*Repentance and amendment of life in trouble, and adversity is necessary.*

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Now there must go with all this repentance, heaviness, and sorrow for the sins which we have committed in time past, amendment of life, the love of God, the fear of God, all virtue and godliness. Manasseh was sorry and penitent for his wicked life and cruel tyranny, and therefore did God deliver him out of the bands and captivity of the king of Babylon, and restored him again to his kingdom in Israel. (2 Kings, xxi. 2 Chron. xxxiii.) By Jonah was it preached and proclaimed unto the

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great city of Nineveh, that God should destroy and overthrow it within forty days. The Ninevites believed this proclamation and preaching, and began to repent and amend their lives with a great and a singular humbleness and submission; and so God of his mercy spared them. (Jonah, iii.)

Now is God's merciful heart nothing diminished: if we do as the Ninevites did, he both can and will pardon and spare us as he did them. (Numb. xi. Isa. i. lix.)

*Christian and godly persuasions and examples out of the word of God, to move men unto patience in affliction and adversity.*

#### THE TWENTY-EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Among all other virtues, in adversity patience is most necessary; not such a patience as to suffer all things to pass, whether they be good or bad, right or wrong, setting all on sixes and sevens; but when we are in trouble and adver-

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sity, and can avoid it by no lawful mean, whereas, after the desire and lust of our flesh, we would murmur, forsake, and give over both God and all manner of righteousness; then to resist and strive against our afflictions and sorrowful thoughts, and, as a man would say, to spear up and to captivate and subdue our natural eyes, wit, and reason under and unto the obedience of God, yielding and submitting ourselves unto him, suffering whatsoever it be with a good and ready will, even though it were most bitter and cruel death, rather than we would swerve from the word of God (Luke, ix.); yea and moreover, to praise God, and to give him thanks, that he will vouchsafe so fatherly to visit us, and that he hath not forgotten us:—

This is called a right Christian patience; for it is God's precept and commandment, that we should not murmur or grudge against him when he chasteneth us; but that we should submit ourselves most humbly unto

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his holy will, and after a certain manner to wish, that is to say, willingly to suffer and bear such punishment and correction, whereby we remain and continue obedient unto his godly righteousness. Murmur not, as certain murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. (1 Cor. x. Numb. xxi.)

Wherefore we ought to shew patience in all things, as a point of our duty; and it is a grievous sin to murmur and grudge against the judgment of God, and to resist and strive against God's will. And God doth not only command patience, but also is himself patient and long-suffering; which destroyeth not at once the whoremonger, the extortioner, and other such-like wicked and damnable people, with a lightning or thunderbolt, although his holy and strait righteousness requireth no less. (Deut. xxxii.) He giveth time and space sufficient for the man to repent, and to return to grace again.

Hence Paul saith, Dost thou despise the abundant riches of his goodness,

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his patience, and long-suffering? Knowest thou not that the goodness and gentleness of God calleth thee to repentance? (Rom. xii.) According unto this godly example, though it be so that we must suffer somewhat against our will, and contrary to our minds and affections, yet should we not murmur and grudge, but amend our lives, and patiently look and wait for better.

And specially the unspeakable fidelity and love of God towards us ought lawfully to move and persuade us to suffer God to work with us even according to his will and pleasure; for by this means we give God this honour, that he doth us no wrong nor injury, but disposeth all things most wisely, and will direct them to a good end.

On the contrary part, the impatient man murmureth and grudgeth against God, and is angry with him, as though his judgments and works were not just and right, forasmuch as the wicked and



ungodly live in pomp, pleasure, and all dissoluteness, and the virtuous and godly in poverty, sorrow, and misery. He may peradventure fancy and imagine with himself, that God overchargeth his faithful children, and will suffer them to remain in peril, necessity, and danger, and will not hear them. (Psalm xxxvii.)

And thus he is so poisoned with bitterness and obstinacy, that he beginneth to hate and to blaspheme God in heaven, and seeketh unlawful means to help and remedy himself: likeas Saul did, running after witches and soothsayers. (1 Sam. xxviii.) Wherefore let every Christian man take heed, that no such raving fierceness and bitterness come upon him, or at least that it remain not long by him; but in such temptation let him fight manfully, as in the face and sight of the heavenly Captain, which both seeth and knoweth all things, and also most faithfully rescueth his soldiers, and is, as it were, a fellow and one among

them, and will recompense all their labour and travail a thousand fold in the life everlasting.

Moreover, we have an evident and perfect image and spectacle of all patience in our Lord Jesus Christ, as he himself pointed us unto himself, saying, "Whosoever will follow me, let him forsake himself, and take his cross upon his back, and follow me." (Matt. xvi.) When his unspeakable martyrdom and passion began, he prayed, "O Father, if it be possible, take this cup from me; but thy will, and not mine, be done." Where did he ever once murmur or grudge, or cast out so much as one untoward and impatient word, when he was mocked and scorned, scourged and beaten, and most cruelly misordered and dealt withal? (Matt. xxvi. Mark, xiv. Luke, xxii. John, vi. xviii. Isa. liii.)

Print this well and surely in thy mind, that he did pray upon the cross for his greatest enemies, and said, "Father, forgive them, for they know

not what they do." (Luke, xxiii. Acts, vii.) If he through his heavenly and divine might and power rid himself of all his pain, sorrow, and danger, and that we in our sorrow, anguish, and necessity had not felt any heavenly strength nor power from God, then could we not have comforted ourselves at all with our Saviour Jesus Christ. But he would not put off his bitter passion through his almighty power, but rather overcame it through weakness.

Now then if He, whom all angels and creatures in heaven and earth do behold and look upon (Psalm xcvi. Heb. i.), yea, whom they all must serve and fear, doth suffer innocently undeserved, with all patience and meekness, more than ever any Christian man was attempted with, it ought lawfully to make even a heart of stone or iron to yearn and melt, and to take these small afflictions well deserved, most patiently and willingly, and to suffer and bear them most meekly.

And this practice did the holy elect of God in the old time not only inculcate and teach with words, but also express and perform in deed. It was a heavy cross unto Abraham to slay and offer up his most dear son; and yet he with all patience shewed himself obedient unto God therein.

And Isaac, perceiving that it stood upon his life, and that he should die, we read not that he did resist, nor once open his mouth against it. (Gen. xxii.)

Joseph, when he was delivered of his brethren unto the heathen, which were strangers unto him, yet he forgave it his brethren, and did them good for it. (Gen. xxxvii. xlv.) Moses being reviled of the Israelites as a deceiver and a betrayer, yet had such compassion on them that he prayed for them, saying, "O Lord, either forgive them, or else wipe me out of thy book." Here is he willing and ready to take all the Israelites' sins and offences upon himself, that God should

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punish him for them. (Exod. xvii. xxxii. Rom. ix.)

David was fain to be a banished out-cast a long time, and to flee every where from Saul, whom notwithstanding he might as easily have destroyed and killed, as he might have eaten a bit of bread (1 Sam. xviii.); and after that he was put to flight of his own son, yet said patiently, "If I find grace and favour before God, then will he restore me again; but if he say, I have no pleasure nor delight in thee, behold, here I am, let him do with me as pleaseth him best." (2 Sam. xvi.)

Job, the spectacle of patience, being full of sores in his body, spoiled of his goods, and deprived of his children, said thus: "God gave it, and God hath taken it away, the name of the Lord be praised." Furthermore he saith, "If he should kill me, yet will I put my trust in him." (Job, i. ii. xiii.)

Mattathias, in the very highest peril and danger of his body and life, at such time as they would have compelled and

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forced him unto idolatry, made this answer unto the servants and ministers of Antiochus: "We will not swerve nor depart from our faith, neither to the right hand nor the left." (1 Mac. ii.) The Apostles did rejoice that they were worthy to be scourged, beat, and reviled for the name of Jesus. (Acts, v.)

We should learn to cry with Paul, "I am sure that neither death nor life, neither height nor depth, nor any other creature, can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ our Lord."

After the time of the holy Prophets and Apostles, many thousand martyrs (among whom were divers notable matrons, chaste virgins, and other young people) did suffer most grievous torments and afflictions for the truth's sake. (1 Mac. ii. 2 Mac. vi. vii.)

But now here might some man object and say, It is no marvel that the holy saints did suffer joyfully and boldly, for they did suffer innocently, unworthily, and without desert; but as

for me, I must needs complain that I am a wretched sinner, and that which I suffer is for my deserts and sins, so that I suffer worthily; and therefore my cross and affliction can in no wise be compared or likened unto the cross of the holy saints, &c. This objection may be answered in few words.

The holy saints, every one of them, concerning themselves and their own nature, were miserable sinners; but again they were holy and righteous through Jesus Christ, which hath distributed and given unto them also, through true faith, his holiness and righteousness. (Job, iv. xiii. Isa. xiv. 2 Pet. ii. Rev. xx.)

Furthermore, these two virtues, true faith and Christian patience, are so nigh of affinity, and so annexed and knit in fellowship together, that always the one helpeth the other.

Faith, if stirred up, exercised, put in ure, and practised, receiveth increase and more strength through patience in sorrow and affliction; whenas

we for Christ's sake do both desire and also wait for help and strength of God against our nature, which can nothing but doubt and despair; and also against the weakness of the flesh, against the temptation of the devil, and against the assaults of the world.

And again, patience is exercised, proved, and made stronger through true faith. For whosoever knoweth, and is fully persuaded that he hath a gracious and a merciful God, with whom after this miserable life he shall live everlastingly, the same shall suffer all manner of trouble and adversity patiently, christianly, and thankfully. Again, through faith in Christ, we are set at one, and reconciled with God, and assured of his grace, mercy, and favour for Jesus Christ's sake and the merits of his passion. (Rom. iv. Gal. iv. Eph. ii.)

For example: David, forasmuch as he believed truly and steadfastly in God, spake boldly with a courage: God is our hope and strength, a very

present help in all the sorrows and necessities that have assaulted us. Therefore will we not fear, though the world should sink, and though the hills should be carried away in the midst of the sea, &c. (Psal. xlv.) Yea, every Christian man (if it were possible) should be content to lose a thousand bodies and lives, if it were for no other thing but that he hath heard, tasted, and believed the holy Gospel.

But for any man to be impatient, and so to remain, it is an evident token that the same person never had any true faith; or else, if he had, that it is quenched and gone away. For impatience falleth unto murmuring and disobedience against God, and beginneth to hate God, and to blaspheme him.

Also Christian prayer is a great help and furtherance to patience; for in prayer we desire the sanctification of the name of God. Now is the name of God most praised and sanctified, when we, being in the highest danger

and necessity, do depend and hang upon God (through faith and patience) as upon one that will dispose all things well, and to a good end.

Again, in prayer we desire that the kingdom of God may come unto us. (Matt. vi. Luke, xi.) Now, if God will confound and destroy in us the kingdom of the devil and of the flesh, or else would utterly lead and draw us into his godly and heavenly kingdom through the cross, were it not as much as to pray against ourselves, if we should be impatient under the same?

We pray, likewise, that God's will be done. Now if it be God's will that we should have sorrow, trouble, and adversity upon earth, how dare or can we resist or grudge against his will?

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*Examples and causes taken out of natural things, and of heathen men, whereby a man may be moved to patience in adversity.*

THE TWENTY-NINTH CHAPTER.

If there were no holy Scripture at all, yet might a man of his own reason take example of brute beasts, of natural things, as of body and soul, and the natural parts unto them belonging; also of heathen men, Jews, and handicraftsmen, and of all manner of states and degrees of men; and likewise of the angels, and of the devil; whereby they might conclude and learn, that they ought to behave themselves patiently, boldly, and manfully, in adversity and misfortune.

A lamb or a sheep is led unto the slaughter, and never crieth nor openeth the mouth, but suffereth and abideth it patiently and meekly. Even so ought the holy elect of God, when they are cursed and reviled, not to curse or

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revile again; when they are smitten, not to smite again; but to suffer all manner of smart and pain, and not once to open their mouths against it.

Our body is but very worm's meat; and if we could bestow the same to the honour of our Redeemer and Saviour Christ, ought we not to be glad and rejoice, if we might so do? (Job, xix. 1 Cor. xv. Eccles. v.)

Likeas they that are sick and diseased can be content to suffer and abide any of the members of their body to be cut off, and to be burnt, so that they might be any thing relieved and eased thereby of their great smart and continual pain (which is yet but transitory), and be made whole and sound again: even so ought we gladly and willingly to suffer our Lord God, and to be still and quiet when he sendeth us adversity, whereby we may be relieved and discharged of eternal pain, and obtain health, blessing, and salvation for our souls.

If thou canst consider the order and

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course of nature, that is naturally written in thy heart, thou shalt thereby learn and conclude that a man ought to be so strong and steadfast, that he should not be moved by any smart, pain, or other temptation, to do any thing that is unseemly or against honesty.

And out of this honesty, wrought and planted in nature, sprang the learning and examples of the wise and notable heathen men, which we call philosophers, among whom this was a common proverb and sentence: "Bear and forbear." The first word whereof teacheth us, that we should suffer the cross patiently, and to be still and meek when we are visited therewith. And the second signifieth, that we should hate, flee, and avoid all manner of examples, words, or deeds, that might give any manner of occasion to any evil. Aristotle, in his book of manners, teacheth, that felicity and blessedness consisteth not specially in health of body, in abun-

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dance of goods, or in worldly honour, dignity, and estimation, but rather in the exercise and practice of virtue. Out of the which it followeth, that a man that is virtuous may be blessed, though he have never so much trouble and adversity; and he reckoneth and taketh trouble or adversity for the very matter and occasion whereby virtue is most stirred up and exercised, and wherein it doth most shine and appear.

And the same Aristotle also compareth an honest and virtuous man unto a good captain: for likeas a good captain leadeth and ordereth his host, according as the occasion requireth; even so a virtuous man becometh himself patiently and well in adversity, and maketh the best of it.

The Stoics did teach plainly, that it was not to be reckoned an evil thing for us to live in poverty, sickness, and misery; but this only to be evil, to forsake virtue, and shew any point of dishonesty. Cicero, one of the most

notable and excellent Romans, writeth thus: "Remember and persuade this with thyself, that besides sin and dishonesty, nothing can happen to a man whereat he ought to be astonished or abashed." And according to this example did one heathen man often comfort another by all manner of circumstances and things, as these following, and others.

It bescemeth not a man to weep and wail like a child, or a woman. And Seneca writeth thus: It is easier to subdue and overcome a whole nation, than one only man. Item: Thou art no more a child of a year, but thou hast age and years, and therefore more is required of thee than of a child. Thou hast been brought up and instructed from thy youth in godly wisdom and knowledge; the same must thou now practise and shew forth.

Before this time thou couldest comfort and give good counsel unto others; do not now, therefore, like the evil physicians, which boast and

pretend that they can help other men, and cannot help themselves. Before this time hitherto thou hast shewed and behaved thyself manfully; therefore be now like unto thyself, and go not backward. It were an unseemly thing to wax from day to day worse, and weaker, and such-like.

Although this doctrine of the heathen men in this and such other points is to be commended, yet the stories do make mention of many unseemly acts that they did: as this, that Coriolanus, for desire of revenge, did war against his own natural country; also Cato and Antonius, for sorrow and heaviness, did kill and murder themselves. But the very reason of man can discern and judge, that such things are against nature, and against all virtue and honesty.

But the very right and the most notable heathen men have commended and set forth patience, not only with words, but also have shewed the same in example and deed. Among the



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Grecians, Aristides, an excellent virtuous man, being banished out of his country, did take and suffer his misery very manfully and patiently. Among the Romans, Camillus and Attilius Regulus were highly commended and praised for their excellent patience and stoutness, which they shewed in adversity.

Scipio could have defended and revenged himself of the seditious rebellion with force and strong hand. But of an excellent princely heart he went out of the sight of his enemies for a time, and suffered much trouble and injury of them, for the profit of his land, lest he should give the occasion to more bitterness and fierceness. Yea, we read of certain women, as of Cornelia, which in affliction and adversity did shew manly hearts and great stoutness.

But we must always mark the right difference between the heathenish and the Christian patience. As Socrates in his adversity did wonder at the un-

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righteousness of men, and thought that it was but a chance and fortune that he was afflicted; but David knew and confessed that his visitation and affliction came from God. (2 Sam. xxiv. 1 Chron. xii.)

Socrates, forasmuch as he suffereth innocently, and without a cause, he cannot find by his reason that we should wish and desire punishment and affliction; but David, after a certain manner, wisheth and desireth the cross; for he knoweth that it is God's will to testify, and to open manifestly, through the cross and adversity, his wrath and displeasure against sin.

Socrates, in his manly sufferance and patience, neither desireth nor looketh for any help, comfort, or mitigation of his afflictions from God. Yea, the notable Cato, hearing Pompeius, being a good man, was overcome and subdued of Julius, which was a wicked man, began to doubt and despair. But David in his patience

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and obedience calleth upon God for help and deliverance, and is certain and sure that the Almighty Lord doth assist him for the holy and blessed seed's sake, whereof the heathen have no knowledge nor understanding. (Psa. v. Gen. iii.)

Thus, by comparing the one to the other, we shall find and perceive that the doctrine of the Gospel is more pleasant and acceptable, and moveth us unto more thankfulness towards the Gospel of Jesus Christ; through whom, and by whose means, we obtain an whole and a perfect comfort. Now from the old ethnics and heathen men let us descend and come to the Turks, Jews, and to other degrees of men. Many a Turk and Jew would suffer himself to be martyred and tormented most cruelly, rather than he would deny or forsake Mahomet's religion, and his perverse and naughty faith; and why should not a Christian then much more be content to suffer stoutly,

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if need should require, for the Christian religion and faith's sake?

A merchant-man maketh far voyages and great journeys, and ventureth body and goods, and nothing is too hard and sour for him; only for worldly and transitory gain and lucre. And yet his hope is uncertain, whether his chance shall be good or evil. And though he happeneth never so well, yet he bringeth home nothing but frail and transitory goods, which shall have an end.

Now all we have a long voyage to make also, even from earth to heaven. And should not we be as well content, as prompt, glad, and willing, to suffer all manner of perils and dangers that may happen by the way, seeing that we have an infallible and sure hope of eternal and everlasting riches, for Jesus Christ's sake?

A wayfaring man, that goeth from home, although he passeth many pleasant houses and goodly meads, yet minding altogether homeward again;

all such things do nothing tempt nor grieve him: even so, whensoever we have not all our pleasure and delight here, let us stablish our comfort and delight ourselves with our country and habitation in heaven. (2 Cor. v. Phil. iii.)

When a man of an high and noble birth is contemned and mishandled in a strange land, where he is not known, it grieveth him nothing so much as if the like should happen unto him at home in his own natural country. Now is our natural country in heaven; upon earth we are but strangers and pilgrims. Therefore we ought the rather to suffer all things patiently here only that we may have rest among the inhabitants in our right eternal land and country. (Heb. xiii. Phil. iii. 1 Pet. i.)

A man of war, preparing himself with all manner of things appertaining to warfare, though his enemy be never so strong, yet he forgetteth all fear, and never once thinketh upon the

strokes and wounds, but only upon the victory and triumph, and goeth his way and fighteth manfully like a giant against his enemies, only for worldly glory and lucre: which thing may redound to the great slander and shame of Christian people, if they for the honour, glory, and pleasure of God should not as promptly, willingly, and manfully, fight against their ghostly enemies for higher and greater triumph, lucre, and commodity.

A ploughman or an husbandman goeth to the field, dungeth, plougheth, soweth, and harroweth his ground, and hath much sorrow therewith, and waiteth for fruit and profit thereof. By the same example doth the holy Apostle St. James move and exhort us unto patience.

Turn a four-cornered stone how thou wilt, and it shall always stand upright: even so, howsoever a right Christian be tempted and assaulted, he will ever, notwithstanding, remain upright. When a man playeth at the

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tables, he cannot always cast what he would have, but whatsoever he hath cast, he must make the best of it. To this game doth Plato liken our life, wherein happen many things contrary to our will, which we must take and turn all to the best, and never despair.

When a little child that can scarcely go chanceth to stumble upon a stone, he falleth down by and by in the same place, and there lieth still, weeping and crying till somebody take him up. But people of reason and understanding must not do like children, but must use and endeavour themselves, what sickness or inconvenience soever happen, by and by (so far as is possible) to ease, heal, and remedy it.

A virtuous child will not forsake his father in his need or trouble, nor an honest wife her husband and spouse, nor yet a faithful servant his master. And why, then, should we forsake God our father, or Christ our spouse and heavenly lord and master, in trouble and adversity?

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Such as are money-merchants, ambitious and vain-glorious, fornicators, whoremongers, and murderers, care neither for shame nor for any thing else, and spare no labour or travail, so that they may bring to pass their wicked lust and desire, and yet oft-times they miss also. And why, then, should not a right godly man be constant; painful, and patient, in honest and good things, as St. Bernard writeth very well, saying, What a faintness, sluggishness, and dulness is this, that such as are wicked and ungodly should be more fervent to wickedness and abomination, than we should be to honesty and goodness; yea, that they should run more swiftly to the devil and to death, than we should to God and to life!

Furthermore, thy fearfulness and impatience is a great pleasure and comfort to thy foes, and a great heaviness and discomfort to thy friends. For doubtless all that wish thee good, do rejoice in thy strength and constant-

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ness. Think also that thou fightest in the presence of the holy angels, which by the provision and appointment of God do dwell with thee, and move and exhort thee to steadfastness; and they rejoice when thou continuest steadfast in goodness. (1 Cor. iv.)

And again: we should to the uttermost of our power flee and abhor all such things as might delight and rejoice the devil; for he is the deadly arch enemy of God, and of all mankind. (1 Pet. iv.)

Now this is the very purpose of his temptations and suggestions, and all that he seeketh, that we, when we are poor, should steal; and when we are sick, that we should murmur against God; and in war, affliction, and adversity, that we should forsake our Christian faith and religion. Constantness, faithfulness, and steadfastness towards God and the Christian church, doth grieve and displease him; therefore we, to rejoice the angels, and to

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grieve the devil, ought the rather to be constant and patient in the midst of all adversity.

*By what means patience may be obtained and gotten; and once had, how it may be kept and increased.*

THE THIRTIETH CHAPTER.

Notwithstanding that we know and perceive that patience is so profitable and fruitful a thing unto us, yet we feel in our flesh a certain misliking and grudge toward the cross. Who can be content and glad to see himself deprived of his life, honour, estimation, goods, children, or wife? The remembrance of the pleasure and prosperity that we have had in times past doth so grieve us, that with Lot's wife we sigh and look back after Sodom (Gen. xix.); and with the children of Israel we lust after the flesh-pots in Egypt. (Exod. xvi.) And like weakness do we also find in the noble king and prophet David, as he himself saith:

Many say unto my soul, He hath no God; my soul would receive no comfort, my spirit is waxen weak and feeble. (Psalm lxxvii.)

Item, our Saviour Jesus, in his innocent flesh, did shew and declare the fearfulness and anguish of the flesh, whenas he, kneeling upon the Mount Olivet, considered his passion and martyrdom that was coming and at hand, and sweat for sorrow and anguish, so that the drops of his sweat gushed upon the earth like drops of blood, and he prayed unto his Father, that, if it were his will, that cup might be taken from him. (Luke, xxii.) In like manner, being upon the cross, he said, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? how long wilt thou thus deal with me? (Psalm xxii. Matt, xxvii.)

But it is not to be understood as though Christ did doubt of his Father's favour and grace; but the weakness of his flesh could have been content to

have suffered no more. (Mark, xiv. Luke, xxii. John, xviii. Gal. v.)

Now likeas the spirit far passeth and overcometh the flesh in Christ: even so must it do in us also, that we have more respect unto God, and unto the life everlasting, than unto this worm-eaten flesh. And therefore now will we declare by most sure and infallible reasons, by what means and ways a man may master and overcome his flesh in the time of the cross and affliction; and so shew and declare true and perfect patience.

Which virtue (likeas all other) hath her first beginning and increase of the grace, power, and spirit of God, without whom we can work nothing that good is, neither yet resist or overcome any evil.

It is written, The victory consisteth not in the multitude of men, but the power and strength cometh from heaven. (1 Mac. iii.)

Item: I am able to do all things through Him that maketh me mighty,

which is Christ. (Phil. iv.) Wherefore, although my fleshly reason sinketh, wavereth, and faileth never so much, yet doth God continually preserve and uphold my spirit, that it do not utterly faint, but continue prompt and willing till such time as it may be delivered and eased.

But now how should we order and behave ourselves that God may grant us his strength, and true patience, and boldness? Forsooth, through faith, hope, prayer, love, true faithfulness, virtue, and godliness, we may obtain it of God.

First, we must furnish and comfort our hearts and minds with faith towards God; for whosoever doth know perfectly, and is certain that God, which is the Lord of all haps and mishaps, of prosperity and adversity, is pacified and reconciled with him, and that he for that cause cannot be deprived of eternal salvation, the same shall be able to condemn and defy all worldly honour, pomp, and lusts. And again, there

can be no pain so bitter, sharp, and grievous unto him, that can bring him out of patience.

In our Christian faith we confess and believe an holy universal church, and that we have fellowship and participation with all saints and elect of God; and also we confess and believe remission of sins, resurrection of the flesh, and life everlasting. And Christ giveth unto every one that hath faith this absolution: Whosoever heareth my word and believeth Him that hath sent me, the same hath everlasting life, and cometh not to judgment, but passeth through from death to life. (John, v.) Wherefore through faith a man obtaineth power, strength, patience, constancy, and steadfastness in all goodness. (Rom. v. viii. Heb. x. xi.)

If strong and mighty enemies should come upon thee, assault and besiege thee, and thou hadst on thy side one whom thou knewest certainly to be a lord, and to have power over all thine



enemies, thou mightest lawfully be bold, and without fear. Now have we (through faith) Christ on our side, which is Lord over all lords, which hath full power over all fortune and misfortune, prosperity and adversity.

Therefore thou must not long think and look upon the weakness of thy flesh, but thou must stir about with thy faith, that is to say, thou must earnestly and diligently consider the mighty and true love of Jesus Christ, which both can and will comfort and rejoice thee more than all misfortune is able to discomfort thee, or to make thee heavy.

It is said to us, Your enemy the devil goeth about like a roaring lion, and seeketh whom he may devour; whom resist ye steadfastly with faith. (1 Pet. v.) Item: St. James saith that your approved faith worketh patience. The holy and faithful Apostles did evidently declare, that according to the inward man it was a joy and comfort unto them to be beaten and

scourged for the Lord's sake. Again: all trouble and affliction are grievous by reason of our weak faith, which is yet but little exercised, and hath not well and fully tasted the riches and treasures of the children of God.

Yet, notwithstanding, no man ought to despair, though he have not a perfect strong faith.

It happeneth oftentimes that the faith, being little and weak, in the time of necessity and affliction, draweth back, and is like to a brand and sparkle that hath but a little fire upon it, which the Lord Jesus will not quench, but increase, so that we do but pray with the dear Apostles, and say, O Lord, strengthen our faith. (Isai. xli. Matt. xiii. Mar. ix.)

But when a man is utterly destitute of faith, as he that knoweth of no other, nor of no better life than this, it is no marvel at all, though he despair at length.

Yea, the more he trusteth in himself, or in any worldly and transitory



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thing, the more unable is he to resist and continue in trouble and adversity. (Acts, iv. v.) For there is no right, comfort, nor succour, in any manner of thing besides the Lord Jesus.

There are two kinds of hope; the one is of nature, and the other cometh of faith. The natural hope is a special gift and benefit of God, which, after a certain manner, doth help and comfort a man that is troubled and vexed, that he do not utterly despair; but in the midst of all adversity hopeth that in a while it will be better, and so waiteth and tarrieth till the adversity be overblown.

Now if this natural hope have such a strength and virtue, should not the other hope, which the Spirit of God doth newly inspire, through faith, work a much greater and perfecter patience and strength; that a man in the midst of his cross shall hope and wait for heavenly comfort and aid of God for Christ's sake? And although the natural hope doth often and many

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times fail and deceive, and is always uncertain, yet this Christian hope doth never fail nor deceive.

The husbandman considereth not only his labour and travail, and what tempest and mischance of weather may fortune; but forasmuch as he trusteth and hopeth that the fruit shall wax and come forth when the time is, therefore he laboureth stoutly and with a good will: even so in the spiritual vineyard, under the yoke of the Lord, the hope and trust of honour and reward maketh men patient and willing, and giveth them courage. If we hope for that thing which we see not, we wait for it through patience. (Rom. viii.)

Furthermore, we must seek upon God fervently and without ceasing through prayer, that he will give us a bold and a strong spirit to suffer all things, and to continue steadfast unto the end. (Matt. xxiv.) Thus doing, he will surely hear us most graciously, according to his promise, and faith-

fully give us his spiritual gifts most specially.

When a man maketh his complaint and openeth his need and grief unto his special friend, he feeleth a certain ease afterward, so that his pain and grief (by rehearsing thereof) is somewhat relieved, remedied, and taken away. Much more comfort and ease shall we receive by telling and opening our grief and complaint unto God.

For a man is soon weary of our complaining; but if we should spend the whole day in praying, crying, and complaining unto God, he would love, comfort, and strengthen us the more. Again, to search, hear, and learn the word of God, and for a man to exercise himself therein, is a great furtherance and help to patience. (Luke, xviii.) For God hath not revealed and opened his word in vain unto us, but hath shewed and set before us in the same most sweet and loving promises, and comfortable examples; that we might learn thereby his goodness;

faithfulness, and great loving kindness, and so comfort and strengthen ourselves by the same, in all manner of trouble and adversity. For an example: the holy word of God saith, In the world ye shall have sorrow and trouble, but be of good comfort, for I have overcome the world. (John, xvi.)

Item: God is our hope and strength. O Lord, thou forsakest not them that seek thee, &c. (Psa. xxv. Isai. xxviii.) Many such godly promises and excellent comfortable sayings have we, which we ought to seek and to fetch, though it were even from Jerusalem, upon our knees, and never to cease lauding and praising of God, that he in these latter days hath made us partakers of the eternal and infallible comfort of our souls in his word and Gospel. Which word is nothing but pure virtue and life, as all faithful hearts do feel and perceive. And it ought no otherwise to be received of us, but as though we heard the very voice of God him-

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self from heaven, speaking all such things as we hear out of the Old and New Testament.

Again: the love which waxeth and springeth out of faith worketh patience in adversity, constancy and steadfastness in goodness. Jacob served seven years for the damsel Rachel, and by reason of the hearty love that he bare unto her the time was but short unto him. And the days that he served for her seemed but a short space. (Gen. xxix.) Even so, whosoever loveth God shall bear and take patiently whatsoever God layeth upon him; and whatsoever he suffereth for God's sake, it shall be easy unto him.

Now sickness and other plagues do not happen unto us without the will and providence of God; therefore if we love God heartily (as we ought to do, forasmuch as he is our merciful Father, and we his children and heirs), we cannot murmur against his visitation, nor be discontent with it, but we shall rather run after him through

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all manner of ways, be they never so rough; and shall be content with all things, be they never so hard and grievous; and evermore press unto him through thick and thin, until such time as we come to rest in him, according to the example of the holy Apostles and martyrs, whose love toward God did mitigate and ease all their sorrow, cross, and adversity. (Acts, iv. 2 Cor. xi. 2 Tim. iii. 1 Mac. xii. 2 Mac. vi. &c.)

Item: to give alms, and to exercise all kinds of virtue and godliness, worketh patience, and that specially, for these two causes: first, because God doth increase his spiritual gifts in them which do well use and bestow them; for to him that hath, shall more be given. (Eccles. xxxv. Matt. xxv.) And secondarily, whosoever behaveth himself godly and virtuously, the same hath a better and a more quiet conscience, and so much more boldness and confidence, but yet only building

and staying upon the righteousness of Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. ix. 2 Tim. ii.)

Item: like as a soldier (first, for fear of prison, and of the shameful death which he should suffer if the battle should be lost; and again, in hope of the high reward and excellent honour and renown if the victory go on his side) will fight the more boldly and lustily: even so every true Christian is stirred and provoked to more faithfulness and patience, when he considereth the exceeding profit and commodity of patience; and again, the great hurt and discommodity of impatience. (Job, i. v. Rev. ii.)

*The fruit, profit, and commodity of patience, as well corporal as spiritual.*

THE THIRTY-FIRST CHAPTER.

Last of all, patience serveth to the honour and glory of God, and to the wealth and profit of man, both in soul, body, and in transitory goods and pos-

sessions, and also in worldly honour and commendation. For the faithful do resist and withstand their pain and smart, and patiently without any grudging suffer the Lord to do all with them according to his own will; not for any vain-glory, nor for any worldly or transitory gain or lucre, but only and specially to shew themselves obedient to God, and to laud and praise him.

As; for example, God was as highly praised and glorified when the three companions of Daniel suffered themselves so patiently and manfully to be cast into the hot burning oven, as he was by the excellent wisdom of Daniel, which he declared in that he could open unto the king his dream. Furthermore, the patient is less sick, and when he is sick, he is sooner whole again. Whereas, through impatience the heart is pressed, vexed, gnawed, consumed, and eaten up. A merry and quiet heart is an help and furtherance to health; but a heavy and sor-

rowful mind maketh the natural strength to consume. Likeas the moths do hurt the garments, and wormis the wood, even so doth sorrow and heaviness hurt the heart of man.

When a child, being corrected and punished of his father, suffereth it patiently, his father hath the more pity upon him, and holdeth his hand, and ceaseth the sooner; but if the child shew himself froward, cry any thing loud, or murmur and grudge against him, then is the father the more angry and fierce over him, and beateth him the more sharply: even so the heavenly Father punisheth the patient man more easily, and healeth him the sooner; but towards them that murmur against him, he sheweth himself sharp and fierce.

The patient man, Job, obtained his goods back again, and was plentifully recompensed of the Lord, even here in this life. The faithful have experience and proof in very deed, that it is good for them to be patient, and to suffer

the Lord to work his will. And again; many, by their impatiency and murmuring, do lose the thing that they should else have enjoyed.

Sufferance and patience is a token of wisdom; unmeasurable heaviness is a token of foolishness, when we weep and complain like children, saying, I would never have thought, I would never have believed that it should have come thus and thus to pass, and such-like.

Item, impatiency entangleth and ensnareth the mind, and maketh a man sometimes dull, and at his wit's end. When a man submitteth and giveth over himself humbly unto the will of God, although his adversity cannot be remedied, yet it shall be easier and lighter unto him; yea, there is nothing so bitter, sour, hard, or terrible to a man, but by this means shall be easy, sweet, light, and unto him comfortable.

And again, so long as a man doth not utterly give over and yield himself

to the good will of God, and will not suffer him to work his pleasure with him, contented whatsoever he sendeth, his grief is the worse, and the more sharp is his pain, his mind never ceaseth gnawing and fretting, and of one sorrow he maketh three or four. Likeas the bird that is caught with the lime-rod, the more it striveth to deliver itself, the more do the feathers cleave and hang to the lime; and in like manner the more the fish that is caught in the net seeketh to come out, the more it windeth itself in; and as he that is bound with chains or fetters of iron, the more he strayeth abroad, the more harm he doth himself: even so such as are froward and impatient in adversity, do increase their sorrow, and hurt themselves the more.

He that hath a heavy burden upon his back, the more he shutleth and moveth the same, the more doth it grieve him: even so the more froward and impatient a man is under the

cross, the more grievous and painful is it unto him. It is not unwisely spoke of the heathen man Pliny, which saith, a good heart in adversity taketh away the half of his misery; and it is a common proverb of the heathen men, the fear of adversity and pain, before it cometh, is worse than the pain itself when it is come.

All manner of punishment and adversity, which according to the merit and desert of man should be unto him a taste and beginning of everlasting pain and damnation, the patient man taketh and useth for an occasion to exercise thereby all kinds of virtue; whereby the spiritual gifts of grace do wax and increase more and more. For they that are patient do keep the true faith toward God, cry and call upon God through fervent prayer; honour, laud, and praise God, not only for that he ruleth and disposeth all things, but also that he bringeth all things to a good end and success, and that he will so continually do

And thus through patience is patience increased.

And contrariwise, the unpatient man decayeth daily in all kinds of virtue, and is daily more and more spoiled and deprived of all goodness. For whosoever is content, and can suffer himself to be provoked of the devil and of the flesh, and giveth place unto them, the same forsaketh faith, prayer, and obedience toward God, and suffereth them to depart, and so is unthankful unto his true and faithful God, whom he cannot be content to suffer, and to commit himself unto him for a while, that he may the more defend and preserve him afterward.

He thinketh that God doth not regard him, and that it is in vain to trust and to wait for help, comfort, and deliverance of God; he imagineth with himself nothing else but that God is utterly wroth and displeased with him, and can find in his heart to curse and to blaspheme God, as though he were a cruel, unmerciful, and an unrighteous

God; shewing more love and favour, and doing more good to the wicked than to the godly; and by this occasion seeketh for aid, help, and comfort of creatures, and maketh vows unto saints and to pilgrimages; that is to say, to chapels of idolatry and of false gods, and maketh wicked covenants, agreements; and promises against God.

Some for fear do forsake and deny the Christian faith, and receive the wicked popish religion, consenting to manifest idolatry, and make God a liar, as that he could not or would not help any more in this or that thing, according to his manifold promises in the Old and New Testament.

Furthermore, unquietness is augmented and increased through impatience, so that a man that is impatient is every day more sorrowful and desperate than other; fleeth, where he should steadfastly continue; and findeth neither rest, ease, nor quietness in his heart: and many one, be-

cause he will not suffer and abide poverty, and other like extreme necessity, falleth to naughtiness, murder, whoredom, lying, stealing, extortion, riot, cutting of purses, and to such other detestable abominations.

Item, they that be impatient do envy and disdain at other men's wealth and prosperity; for they imagine that to be the cause of their cross and sorrow, and they fret against it, envying, disdaining, and hating oft-times the innocent without any cause; yea, they rage and rave, running headlong to revenge themselves. By the reason thereof oft-times (as many stories do testify), contention, hatred, war, uproar, shedding of blood, decay and destruction of the church, of religion, and of the commonwealth, have risen; as Coriolanus, to revenge himself, as an enemy did procure war against his own natural country. Besides this, it is a high honour and commendation before men, before the angels, before the holy saints, and also before

God himself, when a man sheweth patience, boldness, and strength in adversity.

And again, when a man behaveth himself unseemly, unpatiently, and desperately, it is a shame and dishonour for him both before all creatures, and also before the Creator himself. For it is no high nor hard thing for a man to shew a bold and a strong heart, and to be content with God's working, when all things happen prosperously and according to his mind; but this is a virtue and a point of cunning, when a man's mind is not moved nor broken in adversity and misfortune. Likeas in a school of defence, he that hath shewed the most manly touch, and hath won the victory, hath the greater commendation and higher honour: even so it is much more commendable, and a greater honour, to overcome and to subdue our spiritual enemies, and to have the victory against the assaults of the flesh and the devil.



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He that forsaketh his bodily master without a just cause, is taken before the world for a man that lacketh faith, truth, and honesty; and should it not then be a greater point of dishonesty and of unfaithfulness, in the time of affliction under the cross, to forsake Christ and his word, and through impatency to work and to do against the same? He that subdueth the temptations of the mind, is to be preferred, and more to be commended than he that hath besieged and overcome a strong city. For the which cause, as well among the Christians as among the heathen, divers notable persons have gotten high commendation and praise for their trustiness, fidelity, and excellent constancy, which they have shewed at a hazard and at the time of need.

And specially the example of our Saviour Jesus Christ is to be considered, whereof Paul maketh mention, saying, If Christ, after his affliction and obedience even unto death, were

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exalted to high honour and glory, it shall be a furtherance likewise unto us to great honour, if we take our cross daily upon us, and follow him boldly and manly.

Experience teacheth also, when a man will shift away the cross from him by unlawful means, oft-times he is compelled and driven by force to suffer as much or more the shame and dishonesty.

Judith saith, they that have not taken their cross and temptation in the fear of God, but through murmuring and grudging against God have shewed themselves impatient, they were destroyed and murdered of serpents.

Item, whether a man do suffer worthily or innocently, if he continue in murmuring and is impatient, it serveth to his eternal damnation.

And again, whether a man suffer justly or innocently, if he take it patiently as he ought to do, it will be profitable unto him, and a further-

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ance to everlasting life. And all the sorrows and pains upon earth, in respect of the bliss and salvation that is prepared for us, is but the biting of a gnat or a flea, which is easy to overcome.

When men in warfare lying in camp will play the sluggards and be slothful, and not resist the enemies stoutly and manfully, their friends are destroyed, their houses spoiled, their villages set on fire, their dear friends and neighbours murdered and slain, and their wives and daughters defiled and ravished, and all goeth to havoc, and is full of misery: even so in the spiritual warfare and field, if we yield unto the flesh and the devil, and resist them not manfully and constantly, we cast ourselves into perpetual danger, misery, and unquietness. But if we fight against the ghostly enemies stoutly and patiently, we may the sooner attain to perpetual rest and quietness.

He that is sick, if he will not receive

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the medicine because it is bitter and sour, it is no marvel nor wonder if the same man perish in his sickness or disease; but if he would suffer himself to be handled after the mind and counsel of the physician, he might overcome the smart, and have good hope to be restored to his health again: even so all right and faithful Christians, that are patient in adversity, may conceive a much more steadfast and sure hope that they shall attain to everlasting rest of body and soul. Whereas, contrariwise, they which remain and continue in their frowardness and impatiency against God the heavenly physician, must smart for it everlastingly both in body and soul. Scripture to confirm and prove this have we: Happy is that man which suffereth in temptation: for after that he is proved, he shall receive the crown of life. But no man may gather or conclude upon this, that we merit or deserve eternal sal-

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vation for our patience, which thing only Christ alone hath done.

Last of all, patience is profitable, and bringeth singular commodity, not only to him that hath the same virtue, but also to other; for when another perceiveth thee to be constant in the truth, he taketh occasion to exercise like patience and steadfastness. It is manifest by divers credible stories, whenas the Christians have died boldly for the Christian faith's sake, that certain of the persecutors have wondered so sore thereat, that they, by that and no other occasion, were converted to the faith of Christ.

Item, patience and steadfastness have wrought quietness in commonwealths, in the church, in many nations, cities, and towns. Scipio, a noble ruler, chose rather to leave Rome, than to subdue and oppress his enemies with force of arms; the doing whereof turned to the singular commodity of the whole commonwealth; and contrariwise, a bitter,

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cruel, and impatient mind bringeth, worketh, and occasioneth infinite harm and destruction.

Also through our impatience in adversity we give occasion to them that be weak in the faith to doubt whether our faith be the true faith or no, when we confess of God that he is our comfort, both in this world and in the world to come, and yet shew ourselves so desperate in adversity, as though God had utterly forsaken us.

Wherefore we ought to prepare ourselves for all adversity in time of prosperity, and not to hang upon transitory things, that, when need shall require, we may be content to forego them, and continue steadfast in the true faith, wherein whosoever shall continue unto the end, shall be saved.

THE END.

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